



# ULSTER COUNTY NEWS

ULSTER COUNTY NEWS INFORMATION  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Left to right: Joe Roberti, Bob Aiello, Lawrence Coyle, Marjorie Block, Vincent McLaughlin, Rob Parete, Gary Bischoff, Dean Fabiano,**

## **Chairman Donaldson Declares April 2007 Autism Awareness Month**

The Chairman of the Ulster County Legislature, David B. Donaldson, has declared the month of April as Autism Awareness Month in Ulster County. At the March 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ulster County Legislature, a proclamation was presented to Vincent McLaughlin. Robert S. Parete, Chairman of the Health Committee, District No. 4 Legislators Joe Roberti, Bob Aiello, Gary Bischoff and Dean Fabiano, and Vincent's family members, Marjorie Block and Lawrence Coyle joined in the presentation.

According to Donaldson, a diagnosis of autism can be devastating to parents and families, and early diagnosis is the key to effective treatment. "Autism has wide ranging implications for the

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entire family of the diagnosed individual, and early diagnosis, research, training, education and therapies are vital to reducing the effects of autism,” Chairman Donaldson said.

One out of 150 children nationally is diagnosed with the disease each year. It typically appears during the first three years of life, and is far more prevalent in boys than girls.

“Significant progress has been made in the last 30 years in the areas of research, medicine, diagnostic issues and therapies for autism, resulting in an improved quality of life for individuals living with autism and for their families,” Chairman Donaldson said. “But our work is not done; we still need to educate the public about autism, especially teachers, parents and doctors.”

By declaring April as Autism Awareness Month, Donaldson and the Ulster County Legislature hope to contribute to a public dialogue about the disease and raise awareness about this complex developmental disability affecting the normal development of the brain in areas of social interaction and communication skills.