



September 6, 2016

**ACTION ALERT! CONTACT YOUR US REPRESENTATIVES THIS WEEK TO SUPPORT
KEVIN & AVONTE'S LAW (WANDERING BILL)**

THIS WEEK is Kevin & Avonte's Law Call-In Week! Join thousands of disability advocates by calling your Members of Congress (from September 6-9) and asking them to vote to support Kevin & Avonte's Law!

Named for two children with autism who lost their lives after wandering, Kevin & Avonte's law ([S 2614 / HR 4919](#)) would allow US Justice Department grants to be used by law enforcement agencies and nonprofits for education and training programs to prevent wandering in the intellectual/developmental disabilities community. The legislation also provides access to resources to help law enforcement officers find individuals who become separated from their caregivers. More information about this bill can be found on our website [here](#).

Wandering (elopement) is a huge problem in the Down syndrome community, and often results in tragic consequences. NDSS has been actively advocating for this bill, along with other disability groups and law enforcement agencies. The bill has already passed the Senate and is before the House Judiciary Committee. With only a few weeks left of the 114th Congress, we need to apply pressure to Congress to pass this bill which could save many lives!

Because time has run out for the bill to go through the traditional hurdle of a hearing, we are asking the Judiciary Committee to send the bill directly to the House floor for a vote, and to pass it this session.

Step 1: Click [here](#) to find **contact information** for your US Representative. We are asking you to call their Washington DC office, and **be sure to say that you are a constituent.**

Step 2: Click [here](#) to find out if your US Representative has **already signed on as a cosponsor** of HR 4919.

Step 3: Click [here](#) to find out if your US Representative is on the **House Judiciary Committee.**

Talking Points:

- This week, disability advocates from across the country are holding a National Kevin & Avonte's Law Call-in week. This bill (HR 4919) will provide Department of Justice grants to law enforcement agencies to help find children with developmental disabilities like autism and Down syndrome who wander.
- ***I am a constituent, and this bill is very important to my family.***
 - Share a short personal story.
 - For example, "My daughter has Down syndrome, and tends to wander away from crowded places because she gets overwhelmed by the noise. We have been fortunate that our local police officers have always been able to find her and return her safely to our home, but other families have not been so lucky."

- If you do not have a personal story to share, you can say something vague.
 - For example, “My son has Down syndrome. Although we have been lucky in that he does not tend to wander, I know many other families who confront this scary issue on a daily basis.”
- ***If your US Representative is already a cosponsor of this bill, please add:***
 - I would like to thank Representative ___ for already signing onto this bill as a cosponsor. I am requesting that he will continue to support the bill when it comes to the House floor and encourage his colleagues to do the same. This bill needs to pass during THIS CONGRESS.
- ***If your US Representative is a Member of the Judiciary Committee, please add:***
 - This bill is currently before the Judiciary Committee, of which I know Representative ___ is a member.
 - There is no time for a hearing, and many lives are at stake. I am asking Representative ___ to pass this bill through the Judiciary committee without a hearing and send it to the House Floor for a vote during this session. This bill needs to pass during THIS CONGRESS.

Some additional information if you need it:

- **Cost of the bill:** The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that it would cost \$7 million over the 2017-2021 period. The CBO score was very favorable in predicting that enacting this legislation would not affect direct spending or revenues.
- **Social Media Campaign:** Please also make your voice heard on social media. NDSS and other disability organizations will be pushing out social media calls for action all week in addition to call-in campaigns. LIKE NDSS on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) to get this information. **#KevinandAvontesLaw**

For more information, contact Heather Sachs, NDSS Vice President of Advocacy & Public Policy, at hsachs@ndss.org.