



April 22, 2016

The Honorable Chris Smith
2373 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-3004

The Honorable Mike Doyle
239 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-3818

The Honorable Maxine Waters
2221 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-0535

RE: Kevin & Avonte's Law of 2016 (H.R. 4919)

Dear Representatives Smith, Doyle and Waters:

On behalf of the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS), I am writing to express our support for *Kevin & Avonte's Law of 2016* (H.R. 4919). This bill proposes a multi-front approach to address the problem of wandering (elopement) that is pervasive in the developmental disabilities community.

NDSS is the largest nonprofit representing and advocating for people with Down syndrome and their families, with over 375 NDSS affiliate groups spanning all 50 states and representing over 400,000 people with Down syndrome. Unfortunately, the problem of elopement (wandering) is very common in our community, and has resulted in many tragedies and near-tragedies. NDSS and our local Down syndrome affiliates have been working with law enforcement on an ad hoc basis to address this issue, but it has become clear that a nationwide initiative is needed. *Kevin & Avonte's Law* would provide much-needed support and resources to law enforcement agencies to develop programs and assist in locating missing children.

Thank you for your leadership on this bill, which NDSS strongly supports.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sara Hart Weir", written in a cursive style.

Sara Hart Weir, MS
President
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