

**County Council of Howard County, Maryland**

2021 Legislative Session

Legislative day # 16

**RESOLUTION NO. 149 - 2021**

Introduced by: Chairperson at the request of the County Executive

A RESOLUTION confirming the appointment of Elizabeth Benevides to the Commission on Disabilities.

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Introduced and read first time on October 4, 2021.

By order Michelle Harrod  
Michelle Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

Read for a second time and a public hearing held on Oct 13, 2021.

By order Michelle Harrod  
Michelle Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

This Resolution was read the third time and was Adopted , Adopted with amendments , Failed , Withdrawn  by the County Council on Nov 1, 2021.

Certified by Michelle Harrod  
Michelle Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

NOTE: [[text in brackets]] indicates deletions from existing language; TEXT IN SMALL CAPITALS indicates additions to existing language. ~~Strike-out~~ indicates material deleted by amendment; Underlining indicates material added by amendment.



# Elizabeth Benevides

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## **Hussman Institute for Autism**

**DIRECTOR, OUTREACH | 2015—PRESENT**

## **Hussman Foundation**

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, AUTISM PROGRAMS | 2012—PRESENT**

Directs the outreach efforts of the Hussman Institute for Autism, oversees autism-related initiatives and grants for the Hussman Foundation, serves as policy and educational advocate for individuals and families affected by autism and related developmental disabilities, and presents numerous autism and disability-related trainings for educators, clinicians, law enforcement, first responders, parents, school systems, businesses, and community partners.

The vision of the Hussman Institute for Autism is to improve the lives of individuals with autism and their families by advancing the understanding of the causes and neurological basis of autism; identifying potential long-term interventions; and creating a continuum of supports and resources to address immediate needs for research-based teaching methods, communication, inclusion, and independence.

## **CURRENT APPOINTMENTS**

### **Autism Society of America**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS | 2021-PRESENT**

### **Maryland Department of Disabilities**

**APPOINTED MEMBER | ETHAN SAYLOR ALLIANCE FOR SELF-ADVOCATES AS EDUCATORS STEERING COMMITTEE | 2015—PRESENT**

- Develop recommendations for law enforcement training on intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Ensure academy-level and in-service trainings meet the mandated training objectives of the Maryland Police and Corrections Training Commission
- Chair of the Curriculum Committee; recently revised Maryland's Model Policy for police training on intellectual and developmental disabilities

### **Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities**

**CHAIRPERSON | COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL | 2013—PRESENT**

- Advise and support the center in meeting its responsibilities to improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities across the lifespan

**Kennedy Krieger Institute**

**COMMITTEE MEMBER | TRAINING ADVISORY AND CURRICULUM COMMITTEE  
LEADERSHIP EDUCATION IN NEURODEVELOPMENTAL AND RELATED DISABILITIES  
MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH BUREAU | 2014—PRESENT**

- Advance the knowledge and skills of child health professionals to improve health care delivery systems for children with developmental disabilities

**Commission for Transitioning Students with Disabilities**

**APPOINTED CHAIRPERSON | HOWARD COUNTY GOVERNMENT | MARYLAND | 2013—2021**

- Advise local government agencies in facilitating a seamless and effective transition for all Howard County students with disabilities from high school to adult life

**Howard County Autism Society**

**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVOCATE | FORMER BOARD MEMBER AND PRESIDENT | 2008—PRESENT**

- Provide one-to-one parent support, advocacy, and guidance on special education issues
- Previously served as longtime member of the Board of Directors and Board President
- Expanded services, partnership, and advocacy efforts to support more than 1,000 families with autism in the local community

**Maryland Home and Community Based Services Waiver for Children with Autism**

**Maryland State Department of Education**

**MEMBER | ADVISORY COUNCIL | 2016 - PRESENT**

- Advocate on behalf of Maryland families receiving or awaiting Autism Waiver services
- Provide input on necessary improvements to the program
- Developed parent training on the program

**Maryland Education Advocacy Coalition for Students with Disabilities**

**MEMBER**

- Advocate on behalf of Maryland students receiving special education services
- Protect the rights of students with disabilities; bring special education issues before the assistant state superintendent for special education

**Superintendent's Advisory Council for Special Education**

**Howard County Public School System**

**MEMBER**

- Provide input on necessary system-wide improvements to the county school system's special education process
- Chair, Inclusive Schools Workgroup focused on advancing meaningful inclusion for students with disabilities

**PRESENTATIONS AND TRAININGS | 2018-2021**

- Understanding Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: Law Enforcement Response. Crisis Intervention Team. Maryland Police & Corrections Training Commission; Howard County Police Department, Maryland.
- Autism Training for Law Enforcement. Howard County Police Department, Maryland.
- People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) and Law Enforcement. Howard County Police Department, Maryland.
- Accommodating Co-Workers on the Autism Spectrum (co-presented with Zosia Zaks, M.Ed., Hussman Center for Adults with Autism). National Security Agency.
- Including Patrons with Autism: Considerations for Librarians. Howard County Public Library. Somerset County Library.
- Autism Awareness in the Community. Columbia Association, Howard County, Maryland.
- Autism Awareness and Understanding at the Y. Y of Central Maryland.
- Effective Camp Inclusion for Children with Autism: Companion Training. Department of Recreation and Parks, Howard County, Maryland.
- Autism and Special Education. Towson University.
- Special Education Tips for Working with “Passionate” Parents. Towson University.
- Autism Waiver Tips for Newly Enrolled Families. Maryland State Department of Education.
- Real Experts Talk about Autism: What People with Autism and Families Want Others to Know. Psychology Department. University of Maryland Baltimore County.
- Autism and Court Considerations. District Court. Howard County, Maryland.
- Perspectives on Autism: What Families Want Others to Know. Graduate School of Social Work. University of Maryland at Baltimore.
- Strengthening Parent and School Collaboration in IEP Development: Ensuring the Presumption of Competence. Embracing Autism Lecture Series. Hussman Institute for Autism.
- Diversity: It’s about Respecting All Students. Montessori School. Baltimore City.
- Special Education: Strengthening Parent-School Collaboration and Positive Advocacy. Howard County Public Schools, Maryland.
- Perspectives on Autism: What Families Want Clinicians to Know. Kennedy Krieger Institute.
- Supporting People with Autism in Home and Community. Arc of Howard County, Maryland.
- Supporting Teen Residents with Autism. RICA (Regional Institute for Children and Adolescents), Baltimore, Maryland.
- Special Education: Extended School Year Services—Planning Ahead. Howard County Autism Society, Howard County Public Schools, Maryland.
- Effective Advocacy. Partners in Policymaking. Arc of Maryland.
- Ins and Outs of High School for Special Education Students. Howard County Public Schools, Maryland.
- Building the Capacity of Paraprofessionals. Maryland State Department of Education
- Parental Consent and the IEP Process. Howard County Autism Society, Howard County Public Schools, Maryland.
- Supporting Patients with Autism. University of Maryland School of Dentistry.
- Supporting Patients with Autism. Anne Arundel Medical Center, Pediatric Emergency Room.
- Disability and Faith Communities. Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities.

- Special Education during the COVID19 Pandemic. Howard County Autism Society, Howard County Public Schools, Maryland.
- Homeschooling v. Crisis Schooling. Howard County Autism Society, Howard County Public Schools, Maryland.
- Supporting College Students with Autism. Western Connecticut State University.

#### **EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS**

- Bachelor of Arts, English, University of Maryland Baltimore County
- Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, Certified Special Education Advocate

**Council Resolution 149-2021**  
**Introduced: October 4, 2021**  
**LA: Jeff Meyers**

**Legislative Intent:** This Resolution would approve the appointment of Elizabeth Benevides to the Commission on Disabilities.

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**ANALYSIS**

***Who would be replaced by the nominee?***

Andrea Kolp.

***Is that person still actively serving?***

No.

***Is that person eligible for reappointment?***

No.

***If eligible for reappointment, does that person wish to continue to serve?***

N/A

***Any additional information (beyond what is included in resume) you can find about the nominee via a web search.***

Council Resolution 141-2016 appointed Elizabeth Benevides to the Commission for Transitioning Students with Disabilities.<sup>1</sup>

Ms. Benevides is the associate director for outreach of the Hussman Institute for Autism. She is an advisory member of the Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities at the Kennedy Krieger Institute and an appointed member of the Maryland Department of Disabilities' Ethan Saylor Alliance for Self-Advocates steering committee. She is the special education consultant to and Past President of the Howard County Autism Society.

***If the board has specific qualifications for different members, where the nominee fits in that mix.***

Ms. Benevides lives in Marriotsville and is a member of an agency providing services to persons with disabilities.



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<sup>1</sup> Hearing, 34 minutes in: [http://howardcounty.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=2&clip\\_id=2933](http://howardcounty.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=2933)

Section 12.401 of the County Code sets out the qualifications for members of the Commission:

(c) Qualifications:

- (1) At least 13 of the 15 members shall be residents of Howard County.
- (2) All members shall:
  - (i) Have evinced a broad based interest in, and/or experience with, issues involving persons with disabilities; and
  - (ii) Be willing and able to commit time and effort to actively pursue the responsibilities of a working Commission.
- (3) At least eight of the members of the Commission shall be persons with disabilities.
- (4) Two members of the Commission shall be a Board or staff member of an agency providing services to persons with disabilities.
- (5) Two members of the Commission shall be a relative of persons with disabilities.

***The Commission's website, which includes a list of the current members, is here:***

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/CoD>

***Current Board Members:***

- Chairperson: Elliott Finkelstein
- Vice Chairperson: Doug Lea
- Riffat Ashai, M.D.
- Heidi Burghardt
- Nicole Czarnecki
- Arthur Gold
- Joshua Hirsh
- Ande Kolp
- Randy Murbach
- Marian Vessels
- Mia Williams
- Karen Wood

***Anything else you think may be of interest.***

News story about Police Training for dealing with intellectually impaired individuals that mentions Ms. Benevides: <https://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/howard/bs-md-autism-police-training-20160117-story.html>