

News From New York City Councilman Eric Gioia

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Gioia Remarks At Protest Of Michael Savage's Comments On Autism

NEW YORK- Speaking today at a protest of Michael Savage's vicious and inaccurate remarks regarding Autism, Councilman Eric Gioia (D-Queens) released a letter to WOR radio calling for them to remove his syndication in New York City, and issued the following remarks:

"For the thousands of families coping with autism every day, Savage's comments are a slap in the face. The facts are clear. Autism is a disease that has seen a seven hundred percent increase in New York since 1992, and nationally affects one in every 150 children. Michael Savage should not be using his national platform to perpetuate harmful and incorrect myths. Everyone is entitled to their own opinions, but the facts here are irrefutable. There should be zero tolerance for this type of intentionally harmful behavior directed at kids."

The text of the letter to WOR is attached to this release.

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July 21, 2008

Scott Lakefield
Assistant Program Director
WOR Radio
111 Broadway
New York, NY 10006

Dear Mr. Lakefield:

I write to you today to express my outrage over the comments regarding autism made by radio personality Michael Savage on his nationally syndicated show, which is broadcast locally in New York City on WOR.

For the thousands of families coping with autism every day, Savage's disparaging and wildly inaccurate remarks are a slap in the face. They represent the worst kind of ignorance regarding the very serious and all too real illness that affects 1 in 150 children. The facts regarding autism as an illness are undeniable: a new case is diagnosed almost every 20 minutes; autism is the fastest-growing serious developmental disability in the U.S.; and more children will be diagnosed with autism this year than with AIDS, diabetes and cancer combined. Autism is recognized by the Center for Disease Control, the

National Institute of Mental Health, the National Institute for Neurological Disorders, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Mr. Savage is certainly entitled to his opinions. But in this case, he went too far – perpetuating outright falsehoods in a deliberately hurtful manner. The facts here are irrefutable, and Mr. Savage's distortions do WOR radio a disservice. He should not continue to broadcast his hateful message in New York, home to thousands of children and adults medically diagnosed with autism. I trust that WOR will do the right thing.

Sincerely yours,

Eric Gioia