

Action Alert: The Disability Community Unites for an Ad Boycott against The Savage Nation and Talk Radio Networks

Category : Changing Perceptions of Autism and Disability

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Hello everyone,

As many of you have already heard, this past week talk radio personality Michael Weiner, better known on the air as Michael Savage, made several outrageous remarks in regards to autism, including:

*"Now, you want me to tell you my opinion on autism, since I'm not talking about autism? A fraud, a racket...I'll tell you what autism is. In 99 percent of the cases, it's a brat who hasn't been told to cut the act out. That's what autism is.

What do you mean they scream and they're silent? They don't have a father around to tell them, 'Don't act like a moron. You'll get nowhere in life. Stop acting like a putz. Straighten up. Act like a man. Don't sit there crying and screaming, idiot.*"

A full transcript of his statements can be found here: <http://mediamatters.org/items/200807170005>>.

Remarks like these spread ignorance about autism and threaten to return us to a previous era where parents were blamed and labeled as "refrigerator mothers" for having autistic children.

Not only have Michael Weiner and Talk Radio Networks refused to retract these outrageous comments - they have added to them by claiming, unsupported by science of any kind, that the autism spectrum is an overdiagnosed medical condition. This is part of a broader pattern <http://www.marketwatch.com/news/story/talk-radio-network-should-fire/story.aspx?guid=%7B35F497E1-3917-4227-90DB-864FD479FEC4%7D&dist=hppr>>of statements attacking people with disabilities and our families. It requires a strong response.

As a result of this continued attack against autistic people and the broader disability community, the Autistic Self-Advocacy Network has joined with over a dozen national and regional disability rights organizations to call on the sponsors of Talk Radio Networks and the Savage Nation to pull their support.

Together, we have issued a strong joint statement, <http://www.autisticadvocacy.org/modules/smartsection/item.php?itemid=30>>, calling for an ad boycott. In addition, we've collected contact information for several of the major sponsors of Talk Radio Networks in order to empower our community to take further action.

We urge you to use the information below to write, call and e-mail these sponsors and tell them why it is imperative they join companies like Aflac and Telesouth Communication that have already pulled their ads in response to these hateful remarks. There are over 50 million people with disabilities in the United States with approximately \$200 billion in disposable income. It is time for us to make our

voices heard.

Below you will find contact information for Talk Radio Networks' largest sponsors and a sample letter for you to use as a reference point in your e-mails and phone calls. We will be keeping an updated list on our website here <http://www.autisticadvocacy.org/modules/smartsection/item.php?itemid=31> and will post updates and changes to contact information as new information becomes available.

In addition, if you would like to express your support for the disability community's joint statement on this issue, you can do so by signing our petition here <http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/DisabilityCommunitySavage/>. Organizations wishing to become signatories to our joint statement should contact us at info@autisticadvocacy.org. Please distribute this message to your networks and feel free to repost.

Sample Letter:

"To Whom It May Concern:

As a member of the disability community, I am outraged by the recent comments made by Talk Radio Networks' host Michael Alan Weiner, also known as Michael Savage, stating that autism is:

* "a fraud...a racket..." In 99 percent of the cases, it's a brat who hasn't been told to cut the act out. That's what autism is." *

Not only have these comments not been retracted but

Talk Radio Networks continues to stand by Michael Weiner as he continues spreading public misinformation about autism. Autism is a very real developmental disability affecting millions of Americans. Public ignorance and prejudice against people with disabilities represent one of the most significant obstacles to full access and inclusion of people with disabilities throughout society. I urge you to take immediate action and pull your financial support from Talk Radio Networks and The Savage Nation Radio Show in response to these hateful comments."

Contact Information:

Acura:
Acura Public Relations
Mike Spencer, 310-783-3165
info@acura.com

Boca Java:
Stefanie Hochstadter
shochstadter@bocajava.com
1-888-262-2528
Boca Java
730 South Powerline Rd.

Suite D
Deerfield Beach, FL 33442

Campbells:
Campbell Soup Company
Campbell Place
Camden, NJ 08103-1701
Phone: 800-257-8443
Phone: 800-871-0988

Citrix:
851 West Cypress Creek Road
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309, United States
Americas PR
Jason Wyse
Americas Senior PR Manager
Phone: (786) 449-3740
Email: jason.wyse@citrix.com
Eric Armstrong
Director, Corporate Communications
Phone: (954) 267-2977
Email: eric.armstrong@citrix.com

Dish Network:
CEO Charlie Ergen: (303) 723-1010
CEO assistant: (303) 723-1005
EchoStar Satellite L.L.C.
Attn: Corporate Communications
9601 S. Meridian Blvd.
Englewood, CO 80112
press@echostar.com

Ebay:
Alan Marks
Senior Vice President Corporate Communications
Telephone: 1-408-376-7400
Fax: 1-408-369-4855
Email: info@ebay.com

General Motors:
Andrea Canabal
General Motors, Northeast Communications,
Work: +1-914-244-6059,
Cellular: +1-914-391-6898,
andrea.canabal@gm.com
Stockholder line: 313-667-1500

Gallo Winery:
John Segale

Gallo Winery Spokesperson
Work: 916-960-5341
Cell: 916-600-1081

Nestlé Purina PetCare:
Email: kschopp@purina.com
Phone: 314-982-2577
Fax: 314-982-2752

Simon & Shuster:
Michael Selleck
(800) 223-2336
info@simonsays.com

Staples, Inc:
Paul Capelli, 508-253-8530
paul.capelli@staples.com

Subway:
SUBWAY(R) Public Relations
(203) 877-4281
Les Winograd Ext. 1683
winograd_l@subway.com
Kevin Kane Ext.1329
kane_k@subway.com

Volkswagen:
Keyes, Steve
Director, Press and Public Relations
Phone: 703 364 7650
Fax: 703 364 7071
Email: steve.keyes@vw.com

Thank you for your support and please distribute. Our combined activism has and will continue to help us create a world that respects, includes and supports people with disabilities throughout society. Remember, nothing about us, without us!

Regards,
Ari Ne'eman
President
The Autistic Self Advocacy Network
1101 15th Street, NW Suite 1212
Washington, DC 20005
<http://www.autisticadvocacy.org>
732.763.5530