

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SSB 5317

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Requiring universal screening and provider payment for autism and developmental delays for children in medicaid programs.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Senators Frockt, Becker, Mullet, Miloscia, Jayapal, Dammeier, Kohl-Welles, Litzow, Pedersen, Hatfield, Keiser, Darneille, Rivers, McAuliffe, Hasegawa, Rolfes, Conway and Chase).

**Senate Committee on Health Care**  
**Senate Committee on Ways & Means**  
**House Committee on Health Care & Wellness**

**Background:** The American Academy of Pediatrics released guidelines for the provision of providing healthcare services to infants, children, and adolescents, known as Bright Futures. Bright Futures guidelines have been supported by the US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration and were included in the Affordable Care Act as a required preventive health service required for group and individual health plans.

The Bright Futures guidelines include a schedule of recommended universal developmental and autism screenings. These include sensory screenings, developmental and behavioral health assessments, and physical examinations. Two developmental screenings are added at 9 months and between 24 and 30 months. And, two autism screening are added at 18 months and 24 months.

Medicaid programs are not required to follow the Bright Futures guidelines. However, Medicaid includes benefits under the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment Program (EPSDT) for enrollees under 21 years of age. EPSDT covers health screening visits for developmental screening for children between 9 and 30 months. Screening for autism is covered when a child is 36 months of age or younger and is suspected of having autism. Following the Bright Futures guidelines would allow for two additional developmental screenings at 9 months and another between 24 and 30 months plus two autism screenings at 18 and 24 months.

The 2012 Legislature directed the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) to assess the costs and benefits of implementing the Bright Futures guidelines regarding the well-child visit schedule and universal screening for autism and developmental conditions.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

The WSIPP report, completed in January 2013, suggests children covered in Washington Medicaid may be under diagnosed with developmental conditions and delays compared with prevalence rates for national prevalence benchmarks.

**Summary:** Effective January 1, 2016, the Health Care Authority must require universal screening and provider payment for autism and developmental delays as recommended by the Bright Futures guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatrics, as they existed on the effective date of this act, subject to the availability of funds.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate 44 0

First Special Session

Senate 47 0

House 89 3

**Effective:** August 27, 2015