
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2181

State of Washington

59th Legislature

2005 Regular Session

By House Committee on Children & Family Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Dunshee, Darneille, Williams, Simpson, Linville, Morrell, O'Brien, Chase and Santos)

READ FIRST TIME 03/03/05.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating an autism task force; and creating new
2 sections.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

5 (1) Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically
6 appears during the first three years of life;

7 (2) As many as one million five hundred thousand Americans are
8 believed to have some form of autism;

9 (3) The number of children with autism is increasing;

10 (4) Autistic behaviors not only make life difficult for people with
11 autism but also make life hard for their families, health care
12 providers, and teachers;

13 (5) Families coping with this devastating illness are searching for
14 answers about its causes, diagnosis, prevention, and treatment;

15 (6) Presently, there is no effective means to prevent, fully treat,
16 or cure the disorder;

17 (7) Early intervention is critical for affected children to gain
18 maximum benefit from current therapies;

1 (8) Strategies about how to best prevent, identify, treat, and
2 accommodate the needs of children with autism and their families are
3 urgently needed.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The caring for Washington children with
5 autism task force is created to study and make recommendations to the
6 legislature regarding the growing incidence of autism and ways to
7 improve the delivery and coordination of autism services in the state.

8 (2) The task force shall consist of fourteen members: Four members
9 of the legislature, including two members of the senate appointed by
10 the president of the senate, one of the majority party and one of the
11 minority party, and two members of the house of representatives
12 appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, including one
13 of the majority party and one of the minority party; and ten additional
14 members appointed by the governor, who shall include at least:

- 15 (a) Two parents of children with autism;
- 16 (b) A representative of the autism center at the University of
17 Washington;
- 18 (c) A representative of the department of health;
- 19 (d) A representative of the department of social and health
20 services;
- 21 (e) A representative of the office of the superintendent of public
22 instruction;
- 23 (f) A representative of a local school district; and
- 24 (g) A representative of an educational service district.

25 (3) The task force shall:

- 26 (a) Review the available literature and consult with experts to
27 gain an understanding of the causes of the disorder and its incidence
28 in Washington;
- 29 (b) Assess the availability of services currently provided for
30 early screening, diagnosis, and treatment of the disorder;
- 31 (c) Assess the availability of services to assist families of
32 individuals with autism;
- 33 (d) Review the effectiveness of programs and services provided to
34 individuals with autism and their families;
- 35 (e) Review other issues and concerns that the task force believes
36 would be helpful in arriving at sound policy recommendations; and

1 (f) Complete its review and submit its recommendations to the
2 appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the legislature and the
3 governor by December 1, 2006.

4 (4) The department of health shall be the lead agency in providing
5 staff needed for the performance of the work of the task force. The
6 department may seek additional staff assistance from the office of the
7 superintendent of public instruction and the committee staff of the
8 legislature.

9 (5) Legislative members of the task force shall be reimbursed for
10 travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Nonlegislative
11 members, except those representing an employer or organization, are
12 entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW
13 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

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