
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO CONDUCT A STUDY
ON REQUIRING INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR THE DIAGNOSIS AND
TREATMENT OF AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS.

1 WHEREAS, autism is a complex developmental disability that
2 is considered a spectrum disorder by health care professionals
3 as individuals with autism spectrum disorders may share common
4 symptoms with others similarly diagnosed, but the severity of
5 their conditions can vary widely across the spectrum; and
6

7 WHEREAS, autism spectrum disorders currently include
8 autistic disorder, Asperger syndrome, and pervasive
9 developmental disorder not otherwise specified, which is also
10 known as atypical autism; and
11

12 WHEREAS, those affected by an autism spectrum disorder
13 usually show such symptoms as delays or difficulties with social
14 interaction and interpersonal skills and verbal and non-verbal
15 communication, and repetitive or obsessive behavior; and
16

17 WHEREAS, symptoms of an autism spectrum disorder generally
18 begin before the age of three and can persist through adulthood;
19 and
20

21 WHEREAS, health care professionals advise that early and
22 intensive treatment efforts, especially applied behavior
23 analysis, may greatly assist with developmental disabilities
24 related to autism spectrum disorders and prevent an affected
25 individual from becoming permanently dependent on family members
26 or a lifelong ward of the State; and
27

28 WHEREAS, autism spectrum disorders are becoming
29 increasingly prevalent in Hawaii, and treatment for these
30 disorders places a huge financial burden on Hawaii families as



1 treatment is not presently covered by Hawaii health insurers;
2 and
3

4 WHEREAS, extending insurance coverage to the diagnosis and
5 treatment of autism spectrum disorders would provide much needed
6 assistance to affected Hawaii families and improve the potential
7 for those with an autism spectrum disorder to live a more
8 productive life; and
9

10 WHEREAS, the potential benefits to individuals with an
11 autism spectrum disorder and their families, would equally
12 benefit the State by creating long-term savings as a result of
13 positive treatment outcomes that would seem to outweigh the
14 short-term costs; and
15

16 WHEREAS, Senate Bill No. 2631, S.D.2, introduced in the
17 Regular Session of 2012, proposes to require insurance coverage
18 for the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders by
19 accident and health or sickness insurers, mutual benefit
20 societies, and health maintenance organizations; and
21

22 WHEREAS, twenty-nine states currently require that health
23 insurers provide coverage for the treatment of autism spectrum
24 disorders, and there is now cost data available to study the
25 effect on insurance premiums of providing such treatment; and
26

27 WHEREAS, in 2010, the federal Patient Protection and
28 Affordable Care Act was enacted, which requires that health
29 insurance exchanges offer insurance coverage for essential
30 health benefits, including behavioral health treatment; and
31

32 WHEREAS, in 2009, the Auditor submitted a report to the
33 Governor and the Legislature entitled *Study of the Social and*
34 *Financial Impacts of Mandatory Health Insurance Coverage for the*
35 *Diagnosis and Treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorders*, an issue
36 which the Senate Committee on Ways and Means recently requested
37 the Auditor to revisit in consideration of the services proposed
38 by Senate Bill No. 2631, S.D.2, Regular Session of 2012, and the
39 changes to insurance coverage required by the Patient Protection
40 and Affordable Care Act; now, therefore,
41

42 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
43 Twenty-sixth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session



H.C.R. NO. 177

1 of 2012, the Senate concurring, that the Legislative Reference
2 Bureau is requested to:

- 3
- 4 (1) Assess the impact of the Patient Protection and
5 Affordable Care Act on the proposal in Senate Bill No.
6 2631, S.D. 2, Regular Session of 2012, to require
7 insurance coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of
8 autism spectrum disorders by accident and health or
9 sickness insurers, mutual benefit societies, and
10 health maintenance organizations; and
- 11
- 12 (2) Analyze the cost of providing insurance coverage for
13 autism spectrum disorders in Hawaii, based on actual
14 cost effects experienced in other states that require
15 such coverage; and

16


17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Reference
18 Bureau is requested to report its findings and recommendations,
19 including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later
20 than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session
21 of 2013; and

22

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
24 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Acting Director of
25 the Legislative Reference Bureau, the Insurance Commissioner,
26 and the Director of Health.

27

28

29 OFFERED BY: 

MAR 14 2012