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SENATE BILL 6114

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State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

**By** Senators Rasmussen, Roach, Kastama, Benton, Keiser, Morton, Kauffman, Stevens, Clements, Carrell, McCaslin, Marr, Swecker, Shin, Berkey, Pflug, Oemig, Weinstein, Spanel, Honeyford, Regala, Haugen, McAuliffe, Prentice, Fraser, Brown, Murray, Rockefeller, Eide, Tom, Delvin, Pridemore, Hewitt, Parlette, Kline, Kilmer and Kohl-Welles

Read first time 02/22/2007. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to the caring for Washington individuals with  
2 autism task force; and amending 2005 c 259 ss 1 and 2 (uncodified).

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

4 **Sec. 1.** 2005 c 259 s 1 (uncodified) is amended to read as follows:

5 The legislature finds that:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4 (9) It is very difficult to find and access resources and services  
5 for adults with autism and Aspergers Syndrome.

6 **Sec. 2.** 2005 c 259 s 2 (uncodified) is amended to read as follows:

7 (1) The caring for Washington individuals with autism task force is  
8 created to:

9 (a) Study and make recommendations to the legislature regarding the  
10 growing incidence of autism;

11 (b) Assist in implementing the recommendations; and

12 (c) Evaluate ways to improve the delivery and coordination of  
13 autism services in the state.

14 (2) The task force shall consist of fourteen members: Four members  
15 of the legislature, including two members of the senate appointed by  
16 the president of the senate, one of the majority party and one of the  
17 minority party, and two members of the house of representatives  
18 appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, including one  
19 of the majority party and one of the minority party; and ten additional  
20 members appointed by the governor, who shall include at least:

21 (a) Two parents of children with autism;

22 (b) A representative of the autism center at the University of  
23 Washington;

24 (c) A representative of the department of health;

25 (d) A representative of the department of social and health  
26 services;

27 (e) A representative of the office of the superintendent of public  
28 instruction;

29 (f) A representative of a local school district;

30 (g) A representative of an educational service district; and

31 (h) An expert in the field of early intervention services.

32 (3) The task force shall:

33 (a) ~~Review the ((available literature and consult with experts to~~  
34 ~~gain an understanding of the causes of the disorder and its incidence~~  
35 ~~in Washington;~~

36 ~~(b) Assess the availability of services currently provided for~~  
37 ~~early screening, diagnosis, and treatment of the disorder;~~

1 ~~(c) Assess the availability of services to assist families of~~  
2 ~~individuals with autism;~~

3 ~~(d) Review the effectiveness of programs and services provided to~~  
4 ~~individuals with autism and their families;~~

5 ~~(e) Review other issues and concerns that the task force believes~~  
6 ~~would be helpful in arriving at sound policy recommendations; and~~

7 ~~(f) Complete its review and submit its~~) recommendations submitted  
8 by the task force to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of  
9 the legislature and the governor ~~((by))~~ in December ~~((17))~~ 2006 and,  
10 within available funding, assist in their implementation;

11 (b) Review and continue to refine criteria for regional autism  
12 centers throughout Washington state based on community needs in each  
13 area;

14 (c) Consult with experts, as needed, to ensure that implemented  
15 services are of high quality and meet the intended purpose of the task  
16 force recommendations;

17 (d) Compile information for and create the "Washington service  
18 guidelines for individuals with autism spectrum disorders - birth  
19 through the lifespan" book as described in the 2006 task force  
20 recommendations;

21 (e) Monitor the federal combating autism act and its funding  
22 availability and make recommendations on applying for grants as  
23 available to assist in implementation of the 2006 task force  
24 recommendations;

25 (f) Review other issues and concerns that the task force believes  
26 would be helpful in implementing the current recommendations; and

27 (g) Provide a report to the appropriate policy and fiscal  
28 committees of the legislature and the governor by December 1, 2008, on  
29 the status of implementation of the 2006 task force recommendations.

30 (4) The department of health shall be the lead agency in providing  
31 staff needed for the performance of the work of the task force. The  
32 department may seek additional staff assistance from the office of the  
33 superintendent of public instruction and the committee staff of the  
34 legislature.

35 (5) Legislative members of the task force shall be reimbursed for  
36 travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Nonlegislative  
37 members, except those representing an employer or organization, are

1 entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW  
2 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

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