
SENATE BILL 6122

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

By Senators Rasmussen, Delvin, Zarelli, Fairley, Prentice, Rockefeller, Honeyford, Oemig, Hatfield, Regala, Keiser, Parlette, Brandland, Brown, McAuliffe, Shin, Hargrove, Marr, Eide, Clements, Holmquist, Hobbs, Kauffman, Spanel, Kilmer, Pridemore, Kohl-Welles, Weinstein and Roach

Read first time 02/23/2007. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing the regional centers for Washington
2 individuals with autism program; adding a new section to chapter 43.70
3 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

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

6 (1) Autism spectrum disorder is a complex developmental disability
7 that typically 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) 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 (4) Early intervention is critical for affected children to gain
14 maximum benefit from current therapies;

15 (5) Washington lacks the capacity to adequately provide autism
16 spectrum disorder diagnostic services, coordinated care, and trained
17 professionals who can serve individuals with autism spectrum disorder
18 across the lifespan from birth through adulthood;

1 (6) Serious gaps occur at all levels and in all regions of the
2 state making it difficult for families to obtain timely diagnoses or
3 services for their child;

4 (7) Access to diagnostic services and therapies varies
5 considerably. Families living in rural areas have to travel long
6 distances to get a diagnosis and appropriate treatment. Even in urban
7 areas where more services and autism spectrum disorder trained
8 providers are available, waiting lists are long; and

9 (8) Effective and timely intervention requires local treatment
10 options.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.70 RCW
12 to read as follows:

13 (1) The department shall establish the regional centers for
14 Washington individuals with autism program. In establishing the
15 program, the department shall:

16 (a) Establish regional centers in targeted areas of the state to:

17 (i) Provide diagnostic services and therapies;

18 (ii) Train parents and professionals;

19 (iii) Coordinate with currently available services;

20 (iv) Address gaps in services; and

21 (v) Promote a medical home to assure culturally effective,
22 comprehensive health care;

23 (b) Confer with the caring for Washington individuals with autism
24 task force, established in chapter 259, Laws of 2005, on the
25 implementation of the regional centers for Washington individuals with
26 autism program;

27 (c) Expand one existing regional center and locate at least one new
28 regional center in western Washington and expand one existing regional
29 center and locate at least two new regional centers in eastern
30 Washington.

31 (2) Regional centers shall work in partnership with existing
32 service providers and supports to provide:

33 (a) Training to parents and family members, physicians, teachers,
34 and other allied health professionals;

35 (b) Technical assistance to schools, adult day programs, and
36 community agencies in the region;

1 (c) Flexible form of support and training to enable children to
2 stay in their own homes;

3 (d) Seamless, wrap-around services that promote independence and
4 promote inclusion and community integration. Such services shall be
5 coordinated and multidisciplinary and include:

6 (i) Diagnostic services to children and families;

7 (ii) Evidence-based therapies such as speech, occupational therapy,
8 effective education, counseling, individual and group therapy, and
9 applied behavioral analysis;

10 (iii) Family and individual supports, including respite care;

11 (iv) After school programs;

12 (v) Social skills training;

13 (vi) Recreation and athletic opportunities;

14 (vii) Employment programs and job coaching;

15 (viii) Companion home opportunities for adults with autism spectrum
16 disorder; and

17 (ix) Transition support; and

18 (e) Web-based distance learning and telemedicine services.

19 (3) Regional centers shall develop consortia of care to minimize
20 duplication of services.

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