

1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to health insurance coverage  
3           for autism spectrum disorder; requiring a  
4           health insurer or health maintenance  
5           organization that offers major medical coverage  
6           to include coverage for treating autism  
7           spectrum disorder; defining the term "autism  
8           spectrum disorder"; authorizing an insurer or  
9           health maintenance organization to confirm a  
10          diagnosis or review the appropriateness of a  
11          treatment plan; providing that the act does not  
12          affect the licensure of a health care  
13          professional or impair the right to  
14          reimbursement of a health care provider; making  
15          a legislative finding that the act fulfills an  
16          important state interest; providing an  
17          effective date.

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19 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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21           Section 1. Health insurance coverage for autism  
22 spectrum disorder.--

23           (1)(a) As used in this section, the term "autism  
24 spectrum disorder" is a neurobiological condition that  
25 includes autism, Asperger syndrome, and Rett's syndrome.

26           (b) Any health insurer or health maintenance  
27 organization that issues major medical expense coverage in  
28 this state may not exclude coverage prescribed by the  
29 referring physician for the treatment of autism spectrum  
30 disorder, including, but not limited to, coverage for  
31 therapeutic evaluations and interventions, such as speech

1 therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, intensive  
2 early intervention, applied behavioral analysis, and Lovaas  
3 behavioral therapy.

4 (2) Coverage for autism spectrum disorder is subject  
5 to the same terms and conditions that the insurer or health  
6 maintenance organization applies to the treatment of other  
7 disorders. However, an insurer or health maintenance  
8 organization may confirm a diagnosis or review the  
9 appropriateness of a specific treatment plan in order to  
10 ensure that coverage under this section is limited to  
11 diagnostic and treatment services.

12 (3) This section does not affect the scope of  
13 licensure of any health care professional and does not impair  
14 any right to reimbursement which is otherwise guaranteed to a  
15 health care provider.

16 Section 2. The Legislature finds that the provisions  
17 of this act fulfill an important state interest.

18 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 1999.