1   A bill to be entitled

2   An act relating to autism; requiring that a physician

3   refer a minor to an appropriate specialist for

4   screening for autism spectrum disorder under certain

5   circumstances; defining the term "appropriate

6   specialist"; defining the term "neuropsychologist";

7   providing an effective date.

8

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

10

11   Section 1. If the parent or legal guardian of a minor who

12 is an eligible individual, as defined in s. 627.6686, Florida

13 Statutes, believes that the minor exhibits symptoms of autism

14 spectrum disorder, the parent or legal guardian may report his

15 or her observation to a physician licensed in this state. The

16 physician shall immediately refer the minor to an appropriate

17 specialist for screening for autism spectrum disorder. As used

18 in this section, the term "appropriate specialist" includes, but

19 is not limited to, a person who is licensed in this state as:

20   (1) A neuropsychologist and who is competent in the area

21 of neurological testing. As used in this subsection, the term

22 "neuropsychologist" means a psychologist who has additional

23 training and experience in understanding brain-behavior

24 relationships. A neuropsychologist has an advanced degree in

25 psychology, known as a Ph.D. or Psy.D., and usually works with

26 psychiatrists, neurologists, neurosurgeons, physiatrists, and

27 other medical specialists as a team to coordinate a patient's

28 care;

29   (2) A board-certified behavior analyst;

30   (3) A psychologist;

31   (4) A psychiatrist;

32   (5) A neurologist; or

33   (6) A developmental or behavioral pediatrician and who

34 specializes in child neurology.

35   Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2009.