

House Bill 565

By: Representatives Burkhalter of the 41st, Lord of the 121st and Harbin of the 113th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

To amend Chapter 24 of Title 33 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to insurance generally, so as to provide for coverage for the treatment of mental disorders which are, directly or indirectly, caused or contributed to by autism; to provide for definitions; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

Chapter 24 of Title 33 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to insurance generally, is amended by adding a new subsection (b.1) to Code Section 33-24-28.1, relating to coverage of treatment of mental disorders, to read as follows:

"(b.1) To the extent that an insurer provides coverage for mental disorders under this Code section, then such insurer shall, pursuant to this Code section, include treatment for mental disorders which are, directly or indirectly, caused or contributed to by autism. For purposes of this Code section, 'autism' means a developmental neurological disorder, usually appearing during the first three years of life, which affects normal brain functions and is manifested by compulsive, ritualistic behavior and severely impaired social interaction and communication skills."

SECTION 2.

Said chapter is further amended by adding a new subsection (c.1) to Code Section 33-24-29, relating to coverage for treatment of mental disorders under accident and sickness insurance benefit plans providing major medical benefits covering small groups, to read as follows:

"(c.1) To the extent that an insurer provides coverage for mental disorders under this Code section, then such insurer shall, pursuant to this Code section, include treatment for mental disorders which are, directly or indirectly, caused or contributed to by autism. For purposes of this Code section, 'autism' means a developmental neurological disorder, usually appearing during the first three years of life, which affects normal brain functions

1 and is manifested by compulsive, ritualistic behavior and severely impaired social
2 interaction and communication skills."

3 **SECTION 3.**

4 Said chapter is further amended by adding a new subsection (c.1) to Code Section
5 33-24-29.1, relating to coverage for mental disorders under accident and sickness insurance
6 benefit plans providing major medical benefits covering all groups except small groups, to
7 read as follows:

8 "(c.1) To the extent that an insurer provides coverage for mental disorders under this Code
9 section, then such insurer shall, pursuant to this Code section, include treatment for mental
10 disorders which are, directly or indirectly, caused or contributed to by autism. For
11 purposes of this Code section, 'autism' means a developmental neurological disorder,
12 usually appearing during the first three years of life, which affects normal brain functions
13 and is manifested by compulsive, ritualistic behavior and severely impaired social
14 interaction and communication skills."

15 **SECTION 4.**

16 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.