

House Bill 565 (AS PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE)

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

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 24 of Title 33 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 insurance generally, so as to provide that accident and sickness contracts, policies, and
3 benefit plans that provide coverage for neurological disorders shall not deny such benefits
4 based upon a diagnosis of autism; to provide definitions; to provide for related matters; to
5 repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Chapter 24 of Title 33 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to insurance
9 generally, is amended by adding a new Code Section 33-24-59.9 to read as follows:

10 "33-24-59.9.

11 (a) As used in this Code section, the term:

12 (1) 'Accident and sickness contract, policy, or benefit plan' shall have the same meaning
13 as found in Code Section 33-24-59.1. Accident and sickness contract, policy, or benefit
14 plan shall also include without limitation any health benefit plan established pursuant to
15 Article 1 of Chapter 18 of Title 45.

16 (2) 'Autism' means a developmental neurological disorder, usually appearing in the first
17 three years of life, which affects normal brain functions and is manifested by compulsive,
18 ritualistic behavior and severely impaired social interaction and communication skills.

19 (b) An insurer that provides benefits for neurological disorders, whether under a group or
20 individual accident and sickness contract, policy, or benefit plan, shall not deny providing
21 benefits in accordance with the conditions, schedule of benefits, limitations as to type and
22 scope of treatment authorized for neurological disorders, exclusions, cost-sharing
23 arrangements, or copayment requirements which exist in such contract, policy, or benefit
24 plan for neurological disorders because of a diagnosis of autism. The provisions of this
25 subsection shall not expand the type or scope of treatment beyond that authorized for any
26 other diagnosed neurological disorder."

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SECTION 2.

2 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.