

SENATE BILL NO. 171—COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

MARCH 4, 2009

Referred to Committee on Finance

SUMMARY—Makes an appropriation to the Department of Health and Human Services to create the Nevada Autism Task Force and to provide funding for certain autism programs and services. (BDR S-1220)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.
Effect on the State: Contains Appropriation not included in Executive Budget.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in ***bolded italics*** is new; matter between brackets **[omitted material]** is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to financial administration; creating the Nevada Autism Task Force; making an appropriation to the Department of Health and Human Services for certain programs for the study and treatment of autism; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel's Digest:

1 In 2007, the Nevada Legislature created the Nevada Autism Task Force to
2 study autism and make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature about
3 opportunities for improvement of the delivery and coordination of autism services
4 in the State. In addition, the Legislature made an appropriation to the Department of
5 Health and Human Services to provide grants to parents and guardians of children
6 with autism. The Task Force was required to complete its work by not later than
7 August 1, 2008. (Chapter 348, Statutes of Nevada 2007, p. 1674) **Section 1** of this
8 bill recreates the Task Force to conduct the same review during the upcoming
9 biennium. The Task Force will consist of 4 Legislators and 10 Governor-appointed
10 non-Legislators who will serve without compensation. **Section 2** of this bill makes
11 an appropriation of \$2,000,000 to the Department to pay certain expenses related to
12 the Task Force and to assist parents and guardians in paying the cost for the
13 treatment of children with autism. The Department is required to submit a plan
14 setting forth the manner in which the money so appropriated will be expended for
15 approval by the Interim Finance Committee.



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THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. 1. The Nevada Autism Task Force is hereby created to study and make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature regarding the growing incidence of autism and ways to improve the delivery and coordination of autism services in the State.

2. The Task Force shall consist of 14 members who are appointed as follows:

(a) One member of the Senate appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate;

(b) One member of the Senate appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate;

(c) One member of the Assembly appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly;

(d) One member of the Assembly appointed by the Minority Leader of the Assembly; and

(e) Ten members appointed by the Governor, who must include:

(1) Three parents of children with autism;

(2) Four representatives of the Autism Coalition of Nevada;

(3) The Director of the Department of Health and Human Services or his designee;

(4) The Superintendent of Public Instruction or his designee; and

(5) An expert in the field of early intervention services.

➔ The terms of the members appointed pursuant to this subsection begin on August 1, 2009, and expire on June 30, 2011.

3. A vacancy occurring in the membership of the Task Force must be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment.

4. The Governor shall designate a Chairman and Vice Chairman for the Task Force from among the 14 members appointed.

5. The Task Force shall:

(a) Hold not more than six open meetings each year where parents, educators and experts in the field, among others, can present testimony and information to the Task Force;

(b) Review the available literature and consult with experts to gain an understanding of the causes of the disorder and its incidence in Nevada;

(c) Assess the availability of services currently provided for early screening, diagnosis and treatment of the disorder;

(d) Review the effectiveness of programs and services currently provided to persons with autism and their families; and



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(e) Review other issues and concerns that the Task Force believes may help in arriving at sound policy recommendations.

6. The Task Force shall complete its review and submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and to the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the appropriate legislative committees on or before August 1, 2010.

7. The Director of the Department of Health and Human Services shall provide the personnel, facilities, equipment and supplies required by the Task Force to carry out the provisions of this section. The Director may seek additional staff assistance from the Department of Education and the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

8. The members of the Task Force serve without compensation. While engaged in the business of the Task Force, each member is entitled to receive the per diem allowance and travel expenses provided for state officers and employees generally.

Sec. 2. 1. There is hereby appropriated from the State General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services the sum of \$2,000,000 to:

(a) Provide for expenses of the Nevada Autism Task Force created pursuant to section 1 of this act, including, without limitation, travel and meeting costs;

(b) Assist parents and legal guardians in paying the costs for the treatment of children with autism; and

(c) Provide for reasonable administrative expenses incurred by the Department in carrying out the provisions of this section.

➤ Expenditures made pursuant to this subsection must not exceed the amount appropriated pursuant to this subsection.

2. The Department of Health and Human Services shall, as soon as practicable, develop a plan for establishing the eligibility requirements for receiving assistance with paying the costs for the treatment of children with autism pursuant to this section and for expending the money appropriated pursuant to subsection 1. The Department must submit to the Interim Finance Committee the plan required pursuant to this subsection and the Interim Finance Committee must approve the plan before expending any of the money appropriated pursuant to subsection 1.

Sec. 3. Any remaining balance of the appropriation made by section 2 of this act must not be committed for expenditure after June 30, 2011, by the entity to which the appropriation is made or any entity to which money from the appropriation is granted or otherwise transferred in any manner, and any portion of the appropriated money remaining must not be spent for any purpose after September 16, 2011, by either the entity to which the money was appropriated or the entity to which the money was subsequently



- 1 granted or transferred, and must be reverted to the State General
- 2 Fund on or before September 16, 2011.
- 3 **Sec. 4.** This act becomes effective on July 1, 2009.

