

RESOLUTION 20-15

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3 Title: Challenges of Navigating Autism Treatment for Michigan Children
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5 Introduced by: Domenic R. Federico, MD, for the Kent County Delegation
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7 Original Author: David E. Hammond, MD
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9 Referred to: Reference Committee A
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11 House Action: **REFERRED TO THE BOARD**
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14 Whereas, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported in
15 2014 that autism spectrum disorder has been identified in 1:68 or approximately two
16 million children in the United States, and
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18 Whereas, autism was the fastest growing developmental disability in the United
19 States last year with more cases diagnosed than AIDS, diabetes, and cancer
20 combined, and
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22 Whereas, autism, which is typically diagnosed during the first three years of
23 life, often interferes with children’s ability to communicate and interact with others, and
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25 Whereas, Michigan ranks 34th nationally with 1:118 children affected, and
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27 Whereas, the lifelong effect of autism on a family can be both emotionally and
28 financially devastating, and
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30 Whereas, autism is estimated to cost our nation over \$137 billion per year, a
31 figure that is expected to significantly increase over the next decade, and
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33 Whereas, for a child with severe autism the yearly medical costs can exceed
34 \$20,000 per year and behavioral intervention can add \$40,000-\$60,000 per year in
35 additional costs, and
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37 Whereas, early diagnosis and treatment reduces the average lifetime cost of
38 an autism patient’s total care from \$3.7 million to \$1.6 million, and
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40 Whereas, intervention at an early age increases the likelihood that children with
41 autism will be self-sufficient as adults, and
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43 Whereas, the number of patients requiring services for autism in Michigan is
44 escalating at a rate of 10-17 percent per year, and
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46 Whereas, MSMS recognizes the importance of increasing awareness of autism
47 and the impact of early intervention and treatment, and

48 Whereas, Michigan’s law requiring insurance companies to pay for treatment
49 for children with autism, which went into effect on October 15, 2012, was welcome
50 news for families of children with autism, and

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52 Whereas, there are fears regarding subsequent rules and guidelines created
53 by insurers to receive such services, and

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55 Whereas, an example of one such barrier is Blue Cross Blue Shield of
56 Michigan’s requirements that children be screened through Applied Behavior Analysis
57 to confirm a diagnosis of autism in order to be eligible for covered services and that
58 analysis and treatment be provided by a certified Behavior Analyst at one of four
59 approved medical centers, all of which are located in Southeast Michigan, and

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61 Whereas, there is a shortage of Board Certified Behavior Analysts in Michigan
62 available to treat the approximately 16,000 children in Michigan with autism, and

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64 Whereas, there are only around 50 certified Behavior Analysts to provide
65 needed services and the wait list is very long; therefore be it

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67 RESOLVED: That MSMS fully support the education of Michigan citizens to
68 improve their awareness of available resources and access to the treatment of autism
69 under current Michigan law; and be it further

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71 RESOLVED: That MSMS work with autism support groups, insurance
72 companies, and the Michigan Legislature to increase funding for autism research; and
73 be it further

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75 RESOLVED: That MSMS work with insurance companies, universities, and
76 the Michigan Legislature to increase the number of accredited autism treatment
77 centers in Michigan.

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WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: NONE