

Proposed Motions and Rider Funding for Autism Services

Prepared by Legislative Budget Board Staff, 3/25/2015

Overview

Prepare motions to increase General Revenue Funds for autism services at the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), and the University of Houston – Clear Lake, and decrease General Revenue Funds from a rider appropriation (Rider 68) at the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Additionally, delete TEA Rider 68, Support for Children with Autism, amend DARS Rider 22, and add a new rider to Article IX providing information on funding for autism services at DARS and THECB.

Required Actions

1. On page II-22 of the DARS bill pattern, increase General Revenue Funds in Strategy A.3.1, Autism Program, by \$5,021,916 in fiscal year 2016 and \$5,547,026 in fiscal year 2017.
2. On page III-xx of the THECB bill pattern, increase General Revenue Funds in new Strategy D.x.x, Autism Programs, by \$4,050,000 in fiscal year 2016 and \$4,050,000 in fiscal year 2017.
3. On page III-xx of the University of Houston – Clear Lake bill pattern, increase General Revenue Funds in new Strategy C.x.x, Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities, by \$200,000 in fiscal year 2016 and \$200,000 in fiscal year 2017.
4. On page III-23 of the Texas Education Agency bill pattern, decrease the rider appropriation of General Revenue Funds in Rider 68, Support for Children with Autism, by \$9,200,000 in fiscal year 2016 and \$9,200,000 in fiscal year 2017.
5. On page III-23 of the Texas Education Agency bill pattern, delete the following rider:

~~**68. Support for Children with Autism.** In addition to funds appropriated above, the Texas Education Agency is appropriated \$9,200,000 in General Revenue funds in each fiscal year of the 2016–17 biennium to provide widespread support for children with autism. General Revenue to support this appropriation is anticipated to derive from savings related to the phase out of the Autism program at the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, estimated to be \$1,766,155 in fiscal year 2016 and \$3,782,155 in fiscal year 2017; to the extent that such savings do not fund the appropriation identified in this rider, General Revenue shall make up the difference. To the extent possible, the Commissioner shall minimize duplication and maximize efficiency with existing autism programs.~~
6. On page II-33 of the DARS bill pattern, amend the following rider:

22. Autism Program Provisions.

 - a. ~~Appropriations for the 2016–17 biennium included above to the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) in Strategy A.3.1, Autism Services, shall be used only for children enrolled in the program on or before~~

~~August 31, 2015. No additional enrollments shall occur beginning September 1, 2015.~~

Out of funds appropriated above for the 2016-17 biennium to the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) in Strategy A.3.1, Autism Services, expenditures for comprehensive Applied Behavioral Analysis treatment services shall be only for children enrolled in the comprehensive program as of August 31, 2015. Expenditures for children who enroll on or after September 1, 2015 shall be limited to focused ABA treatment services.

- b. Notwithstanding any other transfer provision in this Act, none of the funds appropriated above to DARS shall be transferred to Strategy A.3.1, Autism Services.
- c. Out of funds appropriated above in Strategy A.3.1, Autism Services DARS shall continue to provide support to the Texas Council on Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders and the Texas Autism Research and Resource Center during the 2016-17 biennium.

7. On page IX-xx of the Article IX General Provisions, add the following rider:

Sec. . Funding for Autism Services. Appropriated elsewhere in this Act for autism services is \$22,100,000 in General Revenue Funds for the 2016-17 biennium, which is allocated to the following agencies for the following purposes:

- a. **Department of Assistive and Rehabilitation Services (DARS):** General Revenue Funds totaling \$14,000,000 for the biennium for comprehensive and focused Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) treatment services.
 - 1) Of this amount, expenditures for comprehensive ABA treatment services shall be only for children enrolled in the comprehensive program as of August 31, 2015.
 - 2) Expenditures for children who enroll on or after September 1, 2015 shall be limited to focused ABA treatment services.
- b. **Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB):** General Revenue Funds totaling \$8,100,000 for the 2016-17 biennium to distribute to autism research centers at institutions of higher education that currently provide evidence-based behavioral services and training, in the amounts and for the purposes as follows:
 - 1) Parent-directed Treatment: \$2,250,000 per fiscal year to serve 750 children per year;
 - 2) Board-certified Behavioral Analyst (BCBA) Training for Teachers/Paraprofessionals: \$950,000 per fiscal year to serve 2,547 children per year. The research centers may contract with educational service centers to provide this training;
 - 3) Research, development and evaluation of innovative autism treatment models: \$700,000 per fiscal year; and
 - 4) Administrative support of the programs in subsections b(1) through b(3): \$150,000 per fiscal year.

THECB shall gather data on the above programs from the each institution's autism research center and submit an annual report on the effectiveness of each program, including the number of children served, the number of parents

and/or teachers/paraprofessionals trained, and the results of the research on innovative treatment models. The report shall be submitted no later than September 1 of each year, beginning on September 1, 2016, to the Legislative Budget Board, Office of the Governor, the Chair of the House Appropriations Committee, Chair of the Senate Finance Committee, Speaker of the House, and Lieutenant Governor.