**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 44‑20‑30, AS AMENDED, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO TERMS DEFINED IN THE “SOUTH CAROLINA INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY, RELATED DISABILITIES, HEAD INJURIES, AND SPINAL CORD INJURIES ACT”, SO AS TO ADD A DEFINITION FOR “AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER”; TO AMEND SECTION 38‑71‑280, RELATING TO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER, SO AS TO MAKE CONFORMING CHANGES; AND TO AMEND SECTION 59‑21‑510, AS AMENDED, RELATING TO SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS, SO AS TO MAKE CONFORMING CHANGES.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Section 44‑20‑30 of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 47 of 2011, is further amended by adding an appropriately numbered item at the end to read:

“( ) ‘Autism spectrum disorder’ means any of the pervasive development disorders or autism spectrum disorders as defined by the most recent addition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) or the edition in effect at the time of diagnosis.”

SECTION 2. Section 38‑71‑280(A)(1) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(1) ‘Autism spectrum disorder’ means ~~one of the three following disorders as defined in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders of the American Psychiatric Association:~~

~~(a) Autistic Disorder;~~

~~(b) Asperger’s Syndrome;~~

~~(c) Pervasive Developmental Disorder—Not Otherwise Specified~~ any of the pervasive development disorders or autism spectrum disorders as defined by the most recent addition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) or the edition in effect at the time of diagnosis.”

SECTION 3. Section 59‑21‑510(11) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(11) ‘Pupils with autism spectrum disorder’ means pupils with a severe and chronic disorder that affects communication and behavior and which is manifested during early development by a characteristic pattern of social, communication, and learning behaviors. Autism spectrum disorder ~~is a behaviorally defined syndrome;~~ means any of the pervasive development disorders or autism spectrum disorders as defined by the most recent addition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) or the edition in effect at the time of diagnosis, the essential features of which include disturbances of: developmental rates or sequences; response to sensory stimuli; speech, language, and communication; and capacities to relate to people, objects, and events.”

SECTION 4. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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