



Support Virginia Autism Insurance Reform

- Proposed legislation would require health plans to cover evidence-based, medically necessary treatments prescribed by a licensed physician or psychologist for children age six and under diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder.
- JLARC's 2009 analysis of services for individuals with autism spectrum disorder in Virginia indicates:

*By requiring basic insurance coverage for medically necessary treatments, the Commonwealth could **save \$137,000 in educational costs per student with an autism spectrum disorder** over their educational tenure.*

With over 10,000 students in Virginia with an autism spectrum disorder, this equates to a **\$1.4 billion in projected cost savings** to the Commonwealth and ultimately, the Virginia taxpayer.

- The November 2010 action plan for servicing individuals with autism spectrum disorder released by Virginia Secretary of Health and Human Services William Hazel states:

In determining appropriate strategies for addressing the treatment needs of children with ASDs, Virginia should continue to strongly consider the role of private insurance in covering treatment in the continuing effort of public/private partnership in addressing the needs of those with autism.

- Oliver Wyman (a global actuarial firm that has also been engaged by the Commonwealth on other occasions) estimates the mid-range premium impact of **0.18% or approximately \$7 per member per year**.
- Twenty-three states have passed similar legislation and more than twenty are currently considering it.
- The State of Texas passed legislation that similar treatment for ages 3-6 in 2007. Aetna noted in December 2008 that the cost of the autism coverage in Texas for its first year of existence **of less than 0.1% of premium**. Within two years, the legislature expanded the age to 0-10.
- South Carolina experience data for 2009 indicates a cost of **\$0.20** per member per month.
- BCBS of Minnesota reports their coverage (after more than five years of provision) costs **\$0.83** per member per month.