

Testimony
Engrossed Senate Bill 2115 – Department of Human Services
House Human Services Committee
Representative Weisz, Chairman
March 1, 2017

Chairman Weisz, and members of the House Human Services Committee, I am Maggie Anderson, Director of the Medical Services Division, for the Department of Human Services (Department). I am here in support of Engrossed Senate Bill 2115 which was introduced at the request of the Department.

Engrossed Senate Bill 2115 proposes to add members and to make clarifications to the Autism Spectrum Disorder Task Force, which was originally established by the 2009 Legislative Assembly. The Task Force meets quarterly and examines early intervention and family support services for individuals with autism spectrum disorders to help them remain in their homes and communities.

From the Engrossed version of Senate Bill 2115, Page 1, Lines 10 and 11 propose to replace “director of special education” to the “superintendent of public instruction”. This change creates more consistency with other designated members of the Task Force. During the drafting of this proposed legislation, the Department consulted with the Superintendent of Public Instruction and received her support for this change.

The change on Page 1, Line 19 was made through amendments in the Senate. The Department agrees with this change.

The changes proposed on Page 1, Lines 23 and 24 clarify that a member of the Task Force selected to represent licensed residential child care facilities should be one that is providing services to individuals with an autism spectrum disorder.

The changes proposed on Page 2, Lines 1 through 3 are to add two new members: a representative who is an enrolled member of a federally recognized Indian tribe and an adult self advocate. The Department had proposed a Native American representing Native Americans with autism spectrum disorder and an adult with autism spectrum disorder. The Senate amendments were similar to the Department's proposed members and we were not opposed to the amendments. The Department proposed adding the additional members as a result of recommendations from the Autism Spectrum Disorder Task Force as well as from other advocacy organizations and coalitions.

The Department estimates a minimal fiscal impact for adding the two additional Task Force members and felt any additional costs could be covered within existing funding used to support member's attendance at Task Force meetings.

I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.