

# SENATE BILL 169

P1

2lr0047

(PRE-FILED)

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By: **Chair, Finance Committee (By Request – Departmental – Governor’s Office of Community Initiatives)**

Requested: September 23, 2021

Introduced and read first time: January 12, 2022

Assigned to: Finance

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **State Autism Strategy – Revisions**

3 FOR the purpose of altering the date by which the State Coordinator for Autism Strategy  
4 must submit a certain annual report and repealing the requirement that the report  
5 be submitted to the Secretary of Disabilities; altering the membership of the  
6 Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism-Related Needs; requiring the Governor to  
7 designate the chair of the Advisory Stakeholder Group and establishing term  
8 requirements for the chair; requiring the Governor’s Office of Community Initiatives,  
9 rather than the Department of Disabilities, to provide staff to the Advisory  
10 Stakeholder Group; and generally relating to the State Autism Strategy.

11 BY transferring

12 Article – Human Services

13 Section 7-111 and 7-112, respectively

14 Annotated Code of Maryland

15 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

16 to be

17 Article – State Government

18 Section 9.5-102 and 9.5-103, respectively

19 Annotated Code of Maryland

20 (2021 Replacement Volume)

21 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

22 Article – State Government

23 Section 9.5-102(b) and (d) and 9.5-103(b)(11) and (12), (d), and (g)

24 Annotated Code of Maryland

25 (2021 Replacement Volume)

26 (As enacted by Section 1 of this Act)

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 BY adding to  
2 Article – State Government  
3 Section 9.5–103(b)(12) and (13) and (c)  
4 Annotated Code of Maryland  
5 (2021 Replacement Volume)  
6 (As enacted by Section 1 of this Act)

7 BY repealing  
8 Article – State Government  
9 Section 9.5–103(c)  
10 Annotated Code of Maryland  
11 (2021 Replacement Volume)  
12 (As enacted by Section 1 of this Act)

13 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
14 That Section(s) 7–111 and 7–112, respectively, of Article – Human Services of the  
15 Annotated Code of Maryland be transferred to be Section(s) 9.5–102 and 9.5–103,  
16 respectively, of Article – State Government of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

17 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read  
18 as follows:

19 **Article – State Government**

20 9.5–102.

21 (b) The State Coordinator for Autism Strategy, in consultation with the Advisory  
22 Stakeholder Group on Autism–Related Needs established under [§ 7–112] § 9.5–103 of  
23 this subtitle, shall:

24 (1) identify and evaluate existing public, private, and nonprofit services  
25 for individuals with autism and their families;

26 (2) on or before July 1, 2021, develop a strategic plan for addressing  
27 autism–related needs in the State, including, at a minimum, needs in the areas of  
28 employment, housing, health care, training for first responders and criminal justice  
29 professionals, and identification and intervention;

30 (3) identify national benchmarks and other performance measures to be  
31 included in the strategic plan and used in evaluating the success of the State in addressing  
32 autism–related needs; and

33 (4) monitor and evaluate the implementation of the strategic plan and the  
34 success of the State in addressing autism–related needs, including success in meeting  
35 national benchmarks.

1 (d) (1) On or before [July 1] **DECEMBER 1** each year, beginning in [2021]  
2 **2022**, the State Coordinator for Autism Strategy shall submit a report to [the Secretary  
3 of Disabilities,] the Governor[,] and, in accordance with § 2–1257 of [the State  
4 Government Article] **THIS ARTICLE**, the General Assembly on the development,  
5 implementation, and effectiveness of the strategic plan required under subsection (b) of  
6 this section.

7 (2) Within 30 days after a report required under paragraph (1) of this  
8 subsection is submitted, the State Coordinator for Autism Strategy shall publish the  
9 report on the [Department’s] website **FOR THE GOVERNOR’S OFFICE OF COMMUNITY**  
10 **INITIATIVES.**

11 9.5–103.

12 (b) The Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism–Related Needs consists of the  
13 following members:

14 (11) one representative of Itineris; [and]

15 **(12) ONE REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE SENATE OF MARYLAND,**  
16 **APPOINTED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE;**

17 **(13) TWO REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES,**  
18 **APPOINTED BY THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE; AND**

19 [(12)] **(14)** the following members, appointed by the Governor:

20 (i) a school psychologist;

21 (ii) a physical therapist;

22 (iii) a pediatrician;

23 (iv) two parents of children with autism;

24 (v) two self–advocates with autism;

25 (vi) one representative of public universities in the State;

26 (vii) one representative of local public school systems in the State;

27 (viii) one representative from the business community; and

28 (ix) any additional members with expertise or experience in  
29 autism–related needs as considered necessary.

1 [(c) The State Coordinator for Autism Strategy shall chair the Advisory  
2 Stakeholder Group on Autism–Related Needs.]

3 (c) (1) (i) **THE GOVERNOR SHALL DESIGNATE A CHAIR FROM AMONG**  
4 **THE MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY STAKEHOLDER GROUP ON AUTISM–RELATED**  
5 **NEEDS.**

6 (ii) **THE TERM OF THE CHAIR IS 2 YEARS.**

7 (2) **AT THE END OF A TERM, THE CHAIR:**

8 (i) **IS ELIGIBLE FOR REDESIGNATION; AND**

9 (ii) **CONTINUES TO SERVE UNTIL A SUCCESSOR IS**  
10 **DESIGNATED.**

11 (3) **A CHAIR WHO IS DESIGNATED AFTER A TERM HAS BEGUN SERVES**  
12 **ONLY FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TERM AND UNTIL A SUCCESSOR IS DESIGNATED.**

13 (d) The [Department of Disabilities] **GOVERNOR’S OFFICE OF COMMUNITY**  
14 **INITIATIVES** shall provide staff for the Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism–Related  
15 Needs.

16 (g) [(1) The Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism–Related Needs shall hold  
17 its initial meeting on or before December 31, 2020.

18 (2) Beginning in 2021, the] **THE** Advisory Stakeholder Group on  
19 Autism–Related Needs shall meet quarterly each calendar year.

20 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the term of the initial chair  
21 appointed under § 9.5–103(c) of the State Government Article, as enacted by Section 2 of  
22 this Act, shall begin on the effective date of this Act.

23 SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
24 October 1, 2022.