SENATE BILL 169

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

A BILL ENTITLED

AN ACT concerning

State Autism Strategy – Revisions

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

BY transferring
Article – Human Services
Section 7–111 and 7–112, respectively
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2019 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)
to be
Article – State Government
Section 9.5–102 and 9.5–103, respectively
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2021 Replacement Volume)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – State Government
Section 9.5–102(b) and (d) and 9.5–103(b)(11) and (12), (d), and (g)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2021 Replacement Volume)
(As enacted by Section 1 of this Act)

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.
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BY adding to
Article – State Government
Section 9.5–103(b)(12) and (13) and (c)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2021 Replacement Volume)
(As enacted by Section 1 of this Act)

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

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

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

Article – State Government

9.5–102.

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

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

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

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

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

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

9.5–103.

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

(11) one representative of Itineris; [and]

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

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

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

(i) a school psychologist;

(ii) a physical therapist;

(iii) a pediatrician;

(iv) two parents of children with autism;

(v) two self–advocates with autism;

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

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

(viii) one representative from the business community; and

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

(C) (1) (i) The Governor shall designate a chair from among the members of the Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism–Related Needs.

(ii) The term of the chair is 2 years.

(2) At the end of a term, the chair:

(i) is eligible for redesignation; and

(ii) continues to serve until a successor is designated.

(3) A chair who is designated after a term has begun serves only for the remainder of the term and until a successor is designated.

(d) The [Department of Disabilities] Governor’s Office of Community Initiatives shall provide staff for the Advisory Stakeholder Group on Autism–Related Needs.

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

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

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

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