

House Bill 989

By: Representatives Park of the 101<sup>st</sup>, Holland of the 54<sup>th</sup>, Hutchinson of the 107<sup>th</sup>, Moore of the 95<sup>th</sup>, Kausche of the 50<sup>th</sup>, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 7C of Chapter 4 of Title 49 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
2 relating to therapy services for children with disabilities, so as to convene an advisory  
3 working group to review tools and protocols for the screening of children for trauma within  
4 the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment Program; to provide for findings  
5 and recommendations; to provide for abolishment of the advisory working group; to provide  
6 for subsequent periodic review of screening protocols and tools; to provide for  
7 implementation only if certain conditions are met; to provide for related matters; to repeal  
8 conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

10 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 1.**

11 Article 7C of Chapter 4 of Title 49 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
12 therapy services for children with disabilities, is amended by adding a new Code section to  
13 read as follows:

14 "49-4-169.4.

15 (a) As used in this Code section, the term 'trauma' means the result of an event, series of  
16 events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or  
17 emotionally harmful or threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's  
18 functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

19 (b)(1) The department, in consultation with the Department of Behavioral Health and  
20 Developmental Disabilities, community service boards, managed care plan experts,  
21 behavioral health experts, child welfare experts, and stakeholders, shall convene an  
22 advisory working group to update, amend, or develop, if appropriate, tools and protocols  
23 for the screening of children for trauma, within the EPSDT Program. The advisory  
24 working group shall review and make recommendations regarding:

25 (A) Existing screening tools used in the EPSDT Program, including, but not limited to,  
26 the United States Preventive Services Task Force grade 'A' or 'B' recommendations, and

27 the periodicity schedule and anticipatory guidance issued by the Bright Futures  
28 initiative led by the American Academy of Pediatrics; and  
29 (B) The efficacy and appropriateness of the types of providers authorized to administer  
30 screenings.

31 (2) The department shall convene the advisory working group by October 1, 2020. The  
32 advisory working group shall report its findings and recommendations, as well as the  
33 amount of funding that would be necessary to implement such recommendations, to the  
34 department and to the General Assembly's appropriation committees and committees on  
35 Health and Human Services no later than October 1, 2021. The advisory working group  
36 shall be abolished on December 31, 2021.

37 (3) Findings or recommendations of the advisory working group that cannot be  
38 implemented without a subsequent appropriation by the General Assembly, as determined  
39 by the department, shall not be implemented until such appropriation is made.

40 (4) On and after October 1, 2021, the department shall periodically review and consider  
41 the protocols for the screening of trauma in children consistent with subparagraphs  
42 (b)(1)(A) and (b)(1)(B) of this Code section. The advisory working group created  
43 pursuant to this subsection may, prior to its abolishment, recommend to the department  
44 an existing group appropriate to conduct such periodic review. The department shall  
45 ensure that the protocols for the screening of trauma in children are reviewed and  
46 considered at least once every five years.

47 (c) This Code section shall be implemented only if and to the extent that federal financial  
48 participation under Title XIX of the federal Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. Section 1396,  
49 et seq.) is not jeopardized and all necessary federal approvals have been obtained."

50 **SECTION 2.**

51 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.