



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 489

February Session, 2026

Substitute Senate Bill No. 500

Senate, April 7, 2026

The Committee on Human Services reported through SEN. LESSER of the 9th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING A STATE-FUNDED CAREGIVER PROGRAM TO ASSIST PARENTS OF PERSONS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER ENROLLED IN A MEDICAID WAIVER PROGRAM.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (d) of section 17a-215c of the general statutes is
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
3 *2026*):

4 (d) The Commissioner of Social Services may seek approval of an
5 amendment to the Medicaid state plan or a waiver from federal law,
6 whichever is sufficient and most expeditious, to establish and
7 implement a Medicaid-financed home and community-based program
8 to provide community-based services and, if necessary, housing
9 assistance, to adults diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder but not
10 with intellectual disability. Within available appropriations, the
11 commissioner shall establish a caregiver respite program to assist
12 parents of persons enrolled in any Medicaid home and community-
13 based waiver program for adults diagnosed with autism spectrum

14 disorder by providing state-financed care of such persons.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2026	17a-215c(d)

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Subsection (d), "children" was changed to "persons" and "waiver program" was changed to "waiver program for adults diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder" for clarity.

HS *Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$
Social Services, Dept.	GF - Cost	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill results in a cost to the Department of Social Services (DSS) associated with creating a state-funded respite program to support caregivers of individuals with autism spectrum disorder who are enrolled in the Medicaid Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) waiver program. The cost will depend on funds appropriated to the program and additional staff and resources needed to operate the program.

For reference, the most recent Autism Waiver Waitlist report (April 2025) reported that there were 2,249 individuals on the waitlist, 217 individuals actively receiving services, and 140 individuals assigned a case manager and moving through the enrollment process.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 500

AN ACT CONCERNING A STATE-FUNDED CAREGIVER PROGRAM TO ASSIST PARENTS OF PERSONS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER ENROLLED IN A MEDICAID WAIVER PROGRAM.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Social Services commissioner, within available appropriations, to establish a state-funded caregiver respite program for parents of adult children enrolled in the Medicaid Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) waiver program.

By law, the ASD waiver program provides home- and community-based services to people with ASD who do not have an intellectual disability (an intelligence quotient score of at least 70). To qualify, a person must have substantial limitations in two or more specified major life activities that were diagnosed before age 22 and are expected to continue indefinitely.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 23 Nay 0 (03/19/2026)