

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007**

**SESSION LAW 2008-83
HOUSE BILL 2523**

AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE A SILVER ALERT TO BE ISSUED FOR A PERSON OF ANY AGE, TO AUTHORIZE THE PRODUCTION OF AN EDUCATIONAL VIDEO, AND TO STUDY THE TRAINING NEEDS OF THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM IN RESPONDING TO PERSONS WITH AUTISM, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE JOINT STUDY COMMITTEE ON AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER AND PUBLIC SAFETY.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 143B-499.8(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) If the Center receives a report that involves a missing person who is believed to be suffering from dementia or other cognitive impairment, for the protection of the missing person from potential abuse or other physical harm, neglect, or exploitation, the Center shall issue an alert providing for rapid dissemination of information statewide regarding the missing person. The Center shall make every effort to disseminate the information as quickly as possible when ~~the missing person is 18 years of age or older,~~ and the person's status as missing has been reported to a law enforcement agency."

SECTION 2. The UNC-CH Division TEACCH Autism Program (TEACCH), in consultation with the School of Government and the Autism Society of NC, shall develop a video to raise awareness of autism for those involved in government and public service, including information on recognizing the signs and symptoms of autism spectrum disorders, and contacts for further information on appropriate responses to individuals with autism.

SECTION 3. The School of Government, in consultation with the Autism Society of NC, TEACCH, and appropriate legal associations and organizations, shall study the various groups in the judicial system for which additional training may be necessary on the legal issues and appropriate responses to persons with autism. The study shall include judges, district attorneys, defense attorneys, guardians ad litem, victim witness coordinators, magistrates, juvenile court counselors, and any other group in the judicial system identified as needing additional training. The School of Government shall develop a proposal for the most appropriate way to deliver the necessary training to each identified group and determine what funding, if any, is necessary to deliver the training. The School of Government shall report its findings to the Joint Study Committee on Autism Spectrum Disorder and Public Safety no later than October 1, 2008.

SECTION 4. This act is effective when it becomes law.
In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 7th day of July,
2008.

s/ Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

s/ Joe Hackney
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Michael F. Easley
Governor

Approved 12:13 p.m. this 11th day of July, 2008