

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1999

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HOUSE BILL 1652

Short Title: Funds for Study.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Edwards and Wainwright.

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House.

May 23, 2000

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR AN INDEPENDENT STUDY OF SOCIAL ANXIETY DISORDER.

Whereas, social anxiety disorder (social phobia) is the most common anxiety disorder affecting approximately 7.9% of Americans annually; and among them exerting a lifetime prevalence of 13.3%; and

Whereas, patients with social anxiety disorder are at four-fold increased risk of developing depression, three times more likely to develop panic and two times as likely to suffer from alcoholism; and

Whereas, patients with social anxiety disorder are twice as likely to attempt suicide than those without the disorder; and

Whereas, annual direct medical costs are 25% higher on average for patients suffering with social anxiety disorder versus those with no psychiatric disorder; and

Whereas, social anxiety disorder has been scientifically linked to reduced quality of life, lower educational attainment, and impairment of professional advancement and wage-earning ability; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. The Joint Legislative Study Committee on Social Anxiety Disorder is created. The Committee shall consist of 16 members as follows:

- 1 (1) Four Representatives and two public members appointed by the Speaker
2 of the House of Representatives;
- 3 (2) Four Senators and two public members appointed by the President Pro
4 Tempore of the Senate; and
- 5 (3) Four public members appointed by the Governor. These members shall
6 represent groups or individuals with knowledge and experience in the
7 effects and treatment of social anxiety disorder.

8 Section 2. Initial appointments to the Committee shall be made on or before
9 September 1, 2000. The first meeting of the Committee shall be held no later than
10 October 1, 2000.

11 Section 3. The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall designate one
12 Representative as cochair, and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall designate
13 one Senator as cochair.

14 Section 4. In conducting its study, the Committee shall consider the following:

- 15 (1) The prevalence of social anxiety disorder in the State's population.
- 16 (2) The effects of untreated social anxiety disorder on persons suffering
17 from the disorder and their families, and on the health care system.
- 18 (3) The cost of treating social anxiety disorder versus the indirect costs
19 incurred as a result of nontreatment. Such indirect costs may be related
20 to alcoholism, depression, or other disorders that may be caused by or
21 related to social anxiety disorder.
- 22 (4) Whether social anxiety disorder should be covered under health benefit
23 plans.

24 Section 5. The Committee shall submit to the General Assembly a report of its
25 findings and recommendations of this study not later than the convening of the 2001
26 General Assembly. Upon filing its final report, the Committee shall terminate.

27 Section 6. The Committee, while in the discharge of official duties, may
28 exercise all the powers provided under the provisions of G.S. 120-19 and G.S. 120-19.1
29 through G.S. 120-19.4. The Committee may meet in the Legislative Building or the
30 Legislative Office Building.

31 Section 7. Members of the Committee shall receive subsistence and travel
32 expenses at the rates set forth in G.S. 120-3.1.

33 Section 8. The Committee may contract for professional, clerical, or
34 consultant services as provided by G.S. 120-32.02. The Legislative Administrative
35 Officer shall assign professional staff to assist in the work of the Committee. The House
36 of Representatives' and the Senate's Supervisors of Clerks shall assign clerical staff to the
37 Committee, upon the direction of the Legislative Services Commission. The expenses
38 relating to the employees shall be borne by the Committee.

39 Section 9. When a vacancy occurs in the membership of the Committee, the
40 vacancy shall be filled by the same appointing officer who made the initial appointment.

41 Section 10. All State departments and agencies and local governments and
42 their subdivisions shall furnish the Committee with information in their possession or
43 available to them.

1 Section 11. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the General
2 Assembly the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) for the 2000-2001 fiscal
3 year to implement this act.