

Attn: Senate Finance Committee and House Appropriations Subcommittee on Art. II  
Re: Funding the ABA/IBI Medicaid Benefit

Please fund Rider 21 as introduced in the 87th Legislature (House version only) that provides legislative directive for the Medicaid IBI/ABA Services Benefit, and also allocates funds to support the program from both Federal matching funds and General Revenue. I am supporting the inclusion of Rider 21 in the biennial budget and ask that Rider 21 from the House version be included in the proposed Senate budget with the modifications listed below:

- 1) We request that HHSC include a date certain of September 1st, 2021 in Rider 21, to align available funds with the start of the program.
- 2) We request that the program access funds from the Medicaid Children's Autism Program to provide flexible funding via the next supplemental budget for greater flexibility and efficiency in running the program, as well as helping to accurately project the program's future needs in both funding and in the numbers of children served.
- 3) Proposed rates set by HHSC are too low to build and maintain an ABA provider base. Rates must be sustainable and realistic for providers to accept children under this program.
- 4) We ask that funding is maintained for the Children's Autism Program and to maintain Rider 48 which provides legislative directive for funds for the Children's Autism Program and the Texas Autism Research and Resource Center (TARRC).

For more information please contact me or the Autism Society of Texas at [advocacy@texasautismsociety.org](mailto:advocacy@texasautismsociety.org) or (512) 479-4199, Ext. 10.

Thank you for your time.