

Joint Committee on Health Care Financing 2025-2026 (194th) Bill Summary

<u>Bill Number:</u>	House, No. 1351
<u>Title:</u>	An Act ensuring equal access to medical treatments essential for people with a developmental disability, intellectual disability, or autism.
<u>Sponsor:</u>	Representative Christine P. Barber (Somerville)
<u>Hearing Date:</u>	July 1, 2025
<u>Reporting Deadline:</u>	August 30, 2025
<u>Similar Matters:</u>	S871 (Keenan – Identical, Health Care Financing)
<u>Prior History:</u>*	2023-24 (H128/S97): Referred to the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities; Ordered to a House Study.

Current Law:

Chapter 118E of the General Laws establishes the Division of Medical Assistance (MassHealth) within the Executive Office of Health and Human Services.

Summary:

This legislation adds a new section 63 to chapter 118E, requiring MassHealth to cover the costs of medically necessary habilitative and rehabilitative treatments for individuals aged 21 and older who are covered under this chapter and have been diagnosed with a developmental disability, intellectual disability or autism spectrum disorder. These diagnoses must be made by a licensed physician or psychologist, who also determines the necessity of care. Covered treatments include applied behavior analysis (ABA) provided or supervised by a licensed behavior analyst, aimed at developing, maintaining or restoring an individual's functioning. Additionally, the division must cover the cost of augmentative and alternative communication devices, such as medically necessary tablets, whether dedicated or non-dedicated, to support individuals with communication needs.

Detailed Legislative History:

A refile of H128 & S97 from the 2023-2024 legislative session. H128 referred to the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities. Public hearing on June 27, 2023. On February 5, 2024, reporting date extended to May 2, 2024. Senate concurred on March 28, 2024. Accompanied a study order (H4872) on July 17, 2024. S97 referred to the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities. Public hearing on June 27, 2023. On February 5, 2024, reporting date extended to May 2, 2024. Senate concurred on March 28, 2024. Accompanied a study order (S2675) on May 6, 2024.