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June 25, 2008

To All Parties Interested in the Autism Compact under S.B. 2654:

Senate Bill 2654 was signed into law by Governor Crist on May 20, 2008. This legislation creates the "Window of Opportunity Act," Section 624.916, F.S. Under this act, the Office of Insurance Regulation (the Office) has been charged with convening a workgroup by August 31, 2008 to develop and execute a compact relating to insurance coverage and access to services for persons with developmental disabilities. The Office is also charged with convening a consumer advisory workgroup to provide a forum for comment on the negotiated compact. Deputy Insurance Commissioner Mary Beth Senkewicz will be chairing this effort on my behalf.

The Office is presently accepting expressions of interest from individuals who wish to be appointed to the Autism Compact Workgroup or to the Autism Compact Consumer Advisory Workgroup. If you are interested in serving on either workgroup, please go to our website at www.flor.com/autism.aspx to download the Expression of Interest Form. The form should be completed and emailed to autism@flor.com by July 15, 2008.

The effort to create a compact agreement to increase coverage for behavior analysis, behavior assistant services and medically necessary therapies will be challenging and time-consuming, as the Office's report to the Governor, President of the Senate and Speaker of the House is due Feb.15, 2009. The initial meeting of the Autism Compact Workgroup and the Autism Compact Consumer Advisory Workgroup is tentatively scheduled for August 22, 2008 in Tallahassee. There is no appropriation associated with S.B. 2654, so any individual appointed to either workgroup will be responsible for his or her own expenses.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to participate in this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

Kevin M. McCarty