GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA SESSION 2001

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SENATE BILL 542 Second Edition Engrossed 4/3/01

Short Title:	Database on Psychotropic Meds/Children.	(Public)
Sponsors:	Senators Foxx; Allran, Ballantine, Berger, Bingham, Carrington, Forrester, Garwood, Hartsell, Kerr, Kinnairo Moore, Odom, and Rucho.	▲
Referred to:	Children & Human Resources.	

March 19, 2001

1	A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2	AN ACT TO DIRECT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN
3	SERVICES TO REVIEW THE NEED FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A
4	STATEWIDE DATABASE ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF PSYCHOTROPIC
5	MEDICATIONS TO CHILDREN WHO RECEIVE STATE SERVICES.
6	Whereas, during the past decade the number of American children receiving
7	medication for behavioral and emotional disorders has increased dramatically; and
8	Whereas, there is a growing trend for children to receive medications for
9	depression and other behavioral and health conditions; and
10	Whereas, a report in the Journal of the American Medical Association
11	indicates that the rate of prescribing psychotropic medications for preschool children
12	rose threefold between 1991 and 1995; and
13	Whereas, opponents of the use of psychotropic drugs are concerned about
14	overuse of the drugs, and also that there is not enough information about these drugs'
15	effect on children's development or on their long-term side effects; and
16	Whereas, proponents argue that the use of psychotropic medications may be
17	needed to combat mental illness, but agree that children should not be medicated unless
18	a qualified clinician decides that such a course is in the child's best interest and the
19	medication is used in conjunction with other types of treatment; Now, therefore,
20	The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:
21	SECTION 1. The Department of Health and Human Services shall review
22	the feasibility of establishing and maintaining a statewide database containing
23	information on the prescription and administration of psychotropic medications to
24	children who receive State services. In conducting the review the Department shall
25	consider that any database developed must, in accordance with State and federal law,
26	fully protect the medical records and other privacy interests of the minors for whom the

2

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

1 drugs are prescribed. Not later than January 1, 2002, the Department shall report its findings and recommendations to the Joint Legislative Health Care Oversight 2 3 Committee and to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Mental Health, 4 Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services. The report shall include the cost of establishing and maintaining the database in a manner that provides data for the 5 6 analysis of prescription medication usage by and effects on children. The report shall 7 also provide detailed information on how the database will be maintained in a manner that protects medical records and other privacy interests in compliance with State and 8 9 federal law.

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SECTION 2. This act is effective when it becomes law.