

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 5172

To amend titles XI, XIX, and XXI of the Social Security Act with respect to screening for childhood-onset fluency disorders, and to require coverage of certain speech therapy services under Medicaid and CHIP.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 29, 2026

Mr. BANKS (for himself, Mr. KIM, and Mr. FETTERMAN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

A BILL

To amend titles XI, XIX, and XXI of the Social Security Act with respect to screening for childhood-onset fluency disorders, and to require coverage of certain speech therapy services under Medicaid and CHIP.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Kidd’s Stuttering
5 Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. EXPANDING SCREENING AND REQUIRING COV-**
 2 **ERAGE OF CERTAIN SPEECH THERAPY SERV-**
 3 **ICES UNDER MEDICAID AND CHIP.**

4 (a) INCLUSION OF SCREENING FOR STUTTERING
 5 AND SPEECH FLUENCY IN CORE SET OF CHILD HEALTH
 6 QUALITY MEASURES.—Section 1139A(b)(5) of the Social
 7 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b–9a(b)(5)) is amended—
 8 (1) by striking “Beginning no later than” and
 9 inserting the following:

10 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning no later
 11 than”; and

12 (2) by adding at the end the following new sub-
 13 paragraph:

14 “(B) SCREENING FOR STUTTERING AND
 15 SPEECH FLUENCY.—

16 “(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than
 17 January 1, 2028, the Secretary shall pub-
 18 lish changes to the core measures de-
 19 scribed in subsection (a) to include meas-
 20 ures of screening for childhood-onset flu-
 21 ency disorders, including stuttering, for
 22 children who have attained the age of 2
 23 (and have not attained the age of 6).

24 “(ii) PUBLICATION.—The Secretary
 25 shall publish the changes required by
 26 clause (i) at the same time and in the

1 same manner as the relevant annual rec-
 2 ommended changes required under sub-
 3 paragraph (A).”.

4 (b) REQUIRED SCREENING FOR STUTTERING AND
 5 SPEECH FLUENCY IN MEDICAID WELL-CHILD VISITS.—
 6 Section 1905(r)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act (42
 7 U.S.C. 1396d(r)(1)(B)) is amended—

8 (1) in clause (iv), by striking “and” at the end;

9 (2) in clause (v), by striking the period at the
 10 end and inserting “, and”; and

11 (3) by adding at the end the following new
 12 clause:

13 “(vi) beginning January 1, 2029, for
 14 children who have attained the age of 2
 15 (and have not attained the age of 6),
 16 screening for childhood-onset fluency dis-
 17 orders, including stuttering.”.

18 (c) REQUIRED COVERAGE OF CERTAIN SPEECH
 19 THERAPY SERVICES.—

20 (1) MEDICAID.—Title XIX of the Social Secu-
 21 rity Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) is amended—

22 (A) in section 1902(a)—

23 (i) in paragraph (10)(A), by striking
 24 “and (30)” and inserting “(30), and (32)”;

1 (ii) in paragraph (89), by striking
2 “and” at the end;

3 (iii) in paragraph (90)(C), by striking
4 the period at the end and inserting “;
5 and”; and

6 (iv) by inserting after paragraph (90)
7 the following new paragraph:

8 “(91) provide that the treatment limitations ap-
9 plicable to specified speech therapy services (as de-
10 fined in section 1905(ll)) are no more restrictive
11 than the treatment limitations applicable to any
12 speech therapy services for the treatment of expres-
13 sive language disorder, receptive language disorder,
14 mixed expressive and receptive language disorder, or
15 articulation, for which medical assistance is provided
16 under the State plan (or waiver of such plan).”;

17 (B) in section 1905—

18 (i) in subsection (a)—

19 (I) in paragraph (31), by striking
20 “and” at the end;

21 (II) by redesignating paragraph
22 (32) as paragraph (33); and

23 (III) by inserting after paragraph
24 (31) the following new paragraph:

1 “(32) beginning on January 1, 2029, specified
2 speech therapy services (as defined in subsection
3 (ll)); and”; and

4 (ii) by adding at the end the following
5 new subsection:

6 “(ll) SPECIFIED SPEECH THERAPY SERVICES.—For
7 purposes of subsection (a)(32), the term ‘specified speech
8 therapy services’—

9 “(1) means speech therapy services for the
10 treatment of childhood-onset fluency disorders, in-
11 cluding stuttering, provided to—

12 “(A) individuals who have not attained 21
13 years of age; and

14 “(B) individuals described in section
15 1902(a)(10)(A)(i)(IX); and

16 “(2) includes such services delivered through
17 real-time, audio and video telecommunications tech-
18 nology.”;

19 (C) in section 1932(b), by adding at the
20 end the following new paragraph:

21 “(9) PARITY IN COVERAGE OF SPEECH THER-
22 APY SERVICES.—A medicaid managed care organiza-
23 tion, prepaid inpatient health plan (as defined by the
24 Secretary), prepaid ambulatory health plan (as de-
25 fined by the Secretary), and, when appropriate, pri-

1 mary care case management entity (as defined by
 2 the Secretary) with a contract with a State that pro-
 3 vides for coverage of specified speech therapy serv-
 4 ices (as such term is defined in section 1905(ll))
 5 shall establish procedures to ensure compliance with
 6 the requirements of section 1902(a)(91).”; and

7 (D) in section 1937(b)—

8 (i) in paragraph (1), in the matter
 9 preceding subparagraph (A), by striking
 10 “paragraphs (5) and (6)” and inserting
 11 “the succeeding provisions of this sub-
 12 section”; and

13 (ii) by adding at the end the following
 14 new paragraph:

15 “(9) COVERAGE OF SPECIFIED SPEECH THER-
 16 APY SERVICES.—Notwithstanding the previous provi-
 17 sions of this section, a State may not provide for
 18 medical assistance through enrollment of an indi-
 19 vidual with benchmark coverage or benchmark-equiv-
 20 alent coverage under this section unless the indi-
 21 vidual has access, through such coverage or other-
 22 wise, to specified speech therapy services (as defined
 23 in section 1905(ll)) that are provided in accordance
 24 with the requirements of section 1902(a)(91).”.

25 (2) CHIP.—

1 (A) IN GENERAL.—Section 2103(c) of the
 2 Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397cc(c)) is
 3 amended by adding at the end the following
 4 new paragraph:

5 “(13) REQUIRED COVERAGE OF CERTAIN
 6 SPEECH THERAPY SERVICES.—Beginning January 1,
 7 2029, the child health assistance provided to a tar-
 8 geted low-income child and, in the case of a State
 9 that elects to provide pregnancy-related assistance
 10 pursuant to section 2112, the pregnancy-related as-
 11 sistance provided for a targeted low-income pregnant
 12 woman (as such terms are defined for purposes of
 13 such section) shall include coverage of specified
 14 speech therapy services (as such term is defined in
 15 section 1905(ll)).”.

16 (B) TREATMENT PARITY.—Section
 17 2107(e)(1) of the Social Security Act (42
 18 U.S.C. 1397gg(e)(1)) is amended—

19 (i) by redesignating subparagraphs (I)
 20 through (W) as subparagraphs (J) through
 21 (X), respectively; and

22 (ii) by inserting after subparagraph
 23 (H) the following new subparagraph:

- 1 “(I) Section 1902(a)(91) (relating to par-
2 ity in coverage of speech therapy services).”.

