

1 other clinician to obtain an ASD diagnosis and another six to twelve months to access ABA
2 therapy services; and

3 WHEREAS, due to these long wait times, families in Louisiana often are not able to
4 access medically necessary autism therapy services at the appropriate time, thus delaying
5 their child's progress; and

6 WHEREAS, a delay in accessing services ultimately costs more money since these
7 children often need more intensive therapy for a longer period of time than children who are
8 able to access ABA therapy early on; and

9 WHEREAS, since inception of the Medicaid ABA therapy program in 2014,
10 reimbursement rates for Medicaid ABA services have decreased by as much as twenty-four
11 percent for some services, while the price of labor and prices for almost all goods and
12 services have increased dramatically; and

13 WHEREAS, ABA therapy providers are limited by existing reimbursement rates
14 when determining pay rates for individuals who deliver ABA therapy services and, across
15 Louisiana, adequate staffing is a major barrier to families accessing ABA therapy services;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Louisiana Medicaid is one of only a few state Medicaid programs in the
18 country to use a bifurcated rate structure that reimburses providers different amounts for
19 delivery of the same ABA therapy service, based solely on the education level of the
20 individual providing the service; and

21 WHEREAS, the Louisiana Medicaid reimbursement rate for ABA services delivered
22 by a registered line technician without a college degree is in the lower twenty percent of all
23 states nationwide; and

24 WHEREAS, numerous states are reviewing their reimbursement rates in light of
25 current challenges to providing access to ABA therapy services; and

26 WHEREAS, providers of ABA therapy services for children with ASD are essential
27 and the services they deliver for children with ASD are invaluable; and

28 WHEREAS, fair and equitable funding for ABA therapy providers that make up this
29 state's autism services system is necessary in order to ensure that Louisiana children with
30 ASD have access to medically necessary therapy services.

