

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 74

BY REPRESENTATIVE ECHOLS

LAW ENFORCEMENT: Creates a "Spectrum Alert" system to assist in locating missing persons with autism spectrum disorder

1 AN ACT

2 To enact Chapter 24-D of Title 40 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be
3 comprised of R.S. 40:2529.1 through 2529.4, relative to missing children with autism
4 spectrum disorder; to create a Spectrum Alert program; to develop autism response
5 training for law enforcement officers; to provide for administration of the Spectrum
6 Alert program; to provide for immunity; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. Chapter 24-D of Title 40 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950,
9 comprised of R.S. 40:2529.1 through 2529.4, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 CHAPTER 24-D. SPECTRUM ALERT ACT

11 §2529.1. Short title

12 This Chapter shall be known or may be cited as the "Spectrum Alert Act".

13 §2529.2. Administration; notification system

14 A. The secretary of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections shall
15 develop and implement a system to notify citizens when a child with Autism
16 Spectrum Disorder, hereinafter referred to in this Chapter as "ASD", is determined
17 to be missing and that an alert is to be issued to the community to assist law
18 enforcement officials in locating the missing child with ASD.

19 B. A notification system developed pursuant to the provisions of this Chapter
20 shall include, but not be limited to, the following items:

- 1 (1) Procedures to determine that the child with ASD is truly missing.
- 2 (2) Procedures for notifying the general public of the fact that a child with
- 3 ASD is missing.
- 4 (3) Whether the circumstances of the child deemed missing are aggravated
- 5 due to the age of the child or a life-threatening medical condition or situation which
- 6 requires the child to take life-sustaining medication.
- 7 (4) Coordinate with and encourage the private sector to participate in
- 8 secondary distribution, including the creation and distribution of flyers, electronic
- 9 mail, and text messaging of the missing child with ASD.

10 C. The alert shall be cancelled upon notification that the missing child has
11 been found or at the end of the notification period, whichever comes first. A local
12 law enforcement agency that locates a missing child who is the subject of an alert
13 shall notify the Department of Public Safety and Corrections or its designee, as soon
14 as possible that the missing child has been located.

15 D. The secretary of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections shall
16 promulgate rules and regulations, in accordance with the Administrative Procedure
17 Act, to implement the provisions of this Chapter.

18 §2529.3. Training program

19 In addition to, and in cooperation with, the notification system established by
20 R.S. 40:2529.2, the secretary of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections
21 shall develop a training program to equip law enforcement officers with the skills to
22 understand ASD and other mental illnesses, de-escalate interactions with children in
23 crisis, and respond effectively to a reported missing child with ASD.

24 §2529.4. Immunity from liability

25 Any state police officer, members of other law enforcement entities, radio or
26 television broadcasters, or cable television operators, who transmit or display, or who
27 fail to transmit or display such information concerning a missing child with ASD,
28 and other entities who may become an active component of this effort, shall not be

1 liable for any civil damages or criminal penalties as a result of any acts or omissions
2 relative to the "Spectrum Alert" program.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 74 Original

2026 Regular Session

Echols

Abstract: Creates the Spectrum Alert system to alert the public when a child with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) goes missing.

Proposed law directs the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections (DPS&C) to develop a Spectrum Alert system and lists requirements for the system.

Proposed law directs the DPS&C to develop training for law enforcement officers on responding to Spectrum Alerts.

Proposed law limits liability for individuals assisting in response to a Spectrum Alert.

(Adds R.S. 40:2529.1-2529.4)