

**December 9, 2009**

**COLUMBUS, Ohio** — The Ohio House on Tuesday approved a bill that would require health insurance companies to cover treatment of autism.

Parents of autistic children anxiously awaited the outcome of the vote. When the results came in, the Democratic-controlled House voted 57-39 for the bill, 10TV's Tracy Townsend reported.

"It's time for families not to have to worry about going bankrupt or couples getting divorced under the stress have of having an autistic member of the family," State Rep. Nancy Garland said.

The developmental disorder is currently not covered by insurance, which puts research-based behavioral therapies out of reach for many families.

"We have an eight year old with autism and currently we are not able to go through therapy and counseling because it's \$133 a session and we just don't have it, our insurance doesn't cover it," parent Lori Crimeans said.

The legislation includes a yearly cap on claims and a tax credit for employer provided autism coverage.

The bill will now be reviewed by the Republican-controlled Senate that has already shown skepticism of the legislation. Many Republicans are concerned that requiring insurance companies to cover autism will increase the price of insurance overall.