An Act Addressing the Inequitable Impact of the Pandemic on Black and Latinx Individuals and Other Individuals of Color with Autism  
H. 477 (Rep. Barber) and S. 1472 (Sen. Lovely)

- This legislation ensures that the Massachusetts Autism Commission addresses the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black, Latinx and other individuals of color with autism in its annual report to the legislature.

- Black and Latinx individuals in Massachusetts have been infected with COVID-19 at rates three times higher than White residents. Furthermore, Black and Latinx families are less likely to have the requisite devices and Internet necessary to access remote services, and are more likely to experience additional barriers related to family illness, death, and other COVID-19 stressors. With this legislation, the Autism Commission will address the impact of the pandemic specifically on the Commonwealth’s individuals with autism.

- In order to address inequities faced by individuals with autism of color, this bill directs the Autism Commission to investigate data regarding services provided to individuals with autism, separated by racial and ethnic group, primary language, economic status, and gender.

- The legislation also directs the Autism Commission to provide recommendations on how to improve services and address the inequitable impact of the pandemic and recovery on Black, Latinx and other individuals with autism of color.

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