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# OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research  
and Drafting

Legislative Budget  
Office

**S.B. 257**  
**136<sup>th</sup> General Assembly**

## Bill Analysis

**Version:** As Introduced

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Weinstein

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### SUMMARY

- Establishes the Support Children’s Overall Psychological and Emotional Health (SCOPE) Pilot Program in collaboration between the Department of Health (ODH) and the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) to provide mental health services to individuals eligible for the Program for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs.
- Specifies that the SCOPE Pilot Program terminates after one year or when funding is exhausted, whichever occurs first.
- Requires ODH and DBH to survey participating families to assess the Pilot Program’s effectiveness upon its termination.
- Makes an appropriation.

### DETAILED ANALYSIS

#### SCOPE Pilot Program

The bill establishes the Support Children’s Overall Psychological and Emotional Health (SCOPE) Pilot Program in collaboration between the Department of Health (ODH) and the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH). The SCOPE Pilot Program’s purpose is to provide mental health services to individuals eligible for the Program for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs, although it operates independently from that program.<sup>1</sup> The Program for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs is administered by ODH and serves families of children and youth adults with organic diseases, defects, or congenital or acquired medical conditions that may hinder the achievement of normal growth and development. It provides diagnostic services, treatment from program-approved providers, and service coordination. ODH refers to the

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<sup>1</sup> Section 1(A) and (C).

program as the Complex Medical Help Program.<sup>2</sup> The bill requires ODH to inform families who are eligible for the Program for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs about the SCOPE Pilot Program.<sup>3</sup>

The SCOPE Pilot Program must address mental health conditions that are commonly experienced by children and families managing complex medical issues. The bill requires ODH and DBH to work collaboratively to initiate and oversee the delivery of mental health services, including:<sup>4</sup>

- Identifying mental health conditions that warrant treatment under the Pilot Program, which must include medical-induced post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, and any other conditions that may arise from the stress and trauma of enduring ongoing or serious medical conditions;
- Describing the services to be provided under the Pilot Program, which must include outpatient care, counseling, and the medication for the treatment of mental health conditions;
- Establishing criteria for the provision of services under the Pilot Program;
- Generating a list of providers to provide services under the Pilot Program.

The bill specifies that the SCOPE Pilot Program will terminate after one year or when funding is exhausted, whichever occurs first. Upon its termination, ODH and DBH must jointly survey participating families to assess the Pilot Program's effectiveness.<sup>5</sup>

## Appropriation

The bill appropriates \$500 million in FY 2026 towards the SCOPE Pilot Program. Any amount that is left over after FY 2026 is reappropriated for FY 2027.<sup>6</sup>

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## HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	09-10-25

ANSB0257IN-136/ts

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<sup>2</sup> R.C. 3701.021 to 3701.028, not in the bill; [Complex Medical Help](#), Department of Health, which may be accessed by selecting "Information & Programs" and searching "complex medical help" on the ODH website: [odh.ohio.gov](http://odh.ohio.gov).

<sup>3</sup> Section 1(C).

<sup>4</sup> Section 1(B).

<sup>5</sup> Section 1(D).

<sup>6</sup> Section 3.