

SENATE BILL 873

P1

71r3052
CF HB 1181

By: **Senators Garagiola and Peters**

Introduced and read first time: February 21, 2007

Assigned to: Rules

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force to Study State Assistance to Veterans**

3 FOR the purpose of extending the date by which the members of the Task Force to
4 Study State Assistance to Veterans must be appointed; extending the dates by
5 which the Task Force must report its interim and final findings and
6 recommendations to certain officials; extending the termination date of the Task
7 Force; clarifying language; and generally relating to the Task Force to Study
8 State Assistance to Veterans.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
10 Chapter 290 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2006
11 Section 3 and 5

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
13 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

14 **Chapter 290 of the Acts of 2006**

15 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

16 (a) There is a Task Force to Study State Assistance to Veterans.

17 (b) The Task Force consists of the following members:

18 (1) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President
19 of the Senate;

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (2) one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of
2 the House;

3 (3) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, or the Secretary's designee;

4 (4) the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene, or the Secretary's
5 designee;

6 (5) the Adjutant General of the Military, or the Adjutant General's
7 designee; and

8 (6) the following seven members, jointly appointed by the President of
9 the Senate and the Speaker of the House:

10 (i) one member of the Maryland Congressional Delegation, or
11 the member's designee;

12 (ii) one member of the Maryland Veterans Commission;

13 (iii) two veterans, one of whom is disabled and one of whom has
14 separated from military service within the past 2 years;

15 (iv) one individual who is the surviving spouse or parent of a
16 veteran;

17 (v) one individual with knowledge of providing health care
18 services to veterans; and

19 (vi) a representative of the Maryland Higher Education
20 Commission.

21 (c) The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall jointly
22 designate the chairman of the Task Force.

23 (d) The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall make all
24 appointments on or before July 1, [2006] **2007**.

25 (e) The members of the Task Force shall represent geographic, ethnic, and
26 cultural differences throughout the State.

27 (f) The Task Force may request assistance and information from any
28 government unit or other expert that the Task Force considers appropriate.

1 (g) The Department of Legislative Services shall provide staff for the Task
2 Force.

3 (h) A member of the Task Force:

4 (1) may not receive compensation **AS A MEMBER OF THE TASK**
5 **FORCE**; but

6 (2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard
7 State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

8 (i) The Task Force shall study and make recommendations on veterans
9 issues including:

10 (1) the efficacy of the services and benefits for veterans to determine
11 how well the services and benefits help eligible individuals obtain benefits and
12 whether these are being obtained in a timely manner;

13 (2) whether there are enough advocate offices to efficiently help all
14 eligible individuals receive assistance;

15 (3) the potential impact of the increased number of veterans returning
16 from military service in recent conflicts on services provided by the State;

17 (4) what services are provided to veterans, veterans' families and
18 survivors and what services need to be provided including medical care, hospice care,
19 and mental health services;

20 (5) the feasibility of establishing homes for veterans in the
21 Crownsville Hospital Center and other regions of the State;

22 (6) the feasibility of establishing regional outreach and advocacy
23 centers around the State and using existing service centers as outreach and advocacy
24 centers;

25 (7) the identification of State and federal benefits and services and
26 how to make them more comprehensive;

27 (8) how to improve outreach to women who are eligible to receive
28 veteran-related benefits; and

1 (9) any issue regarding benefits and assistance to veterans that the
2 Task Force determines is necessary.

3 (j) The Task Force shall submit an interim report to the Governor and the
4 General Assembly, on or before December 1, [2006] **2007**, and report its final findings
5 and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State
6 Government Article, the General Assembly, on or before December 1, [2007] **2008**.

7 SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
8 June 1, 2006. Section 3 of this Act shall remain effective for a period of [1 year,
9 6 months and 1 day] **3 YEARS** and, at the end of [December 1, 2007] **MAY 31, 2009**,
10 with no further action required by the General Assembly, Section 3 of this Act shall be
11 abrogated and of no further force and effect.

12 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
13 June 1, 2007.