

SENATE BILL 873

P1

71r3052
CF HB 1181

By: **Senators Garagiola and Peters, Peters, and Dyson**

Introduced and read first time: February 21, 2007

Assigned to: Rules

Re-referred to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs, March 2, 2007

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: March 27, 2007

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

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

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

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

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

15 **Chapter 290 of the Acts of 2006**

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

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



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

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

3 (1) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President
4 of the Senate;

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

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

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

10 (5) the Adjutant General of the Military, or the Adjutant General's
11 designee; and

12 (6) the following seven members, ~~jointly~~ appointed by the ~~President of~~
13 ~~the Senate and the Speaker of the House~~ **GOVERNOR**:

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

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

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

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

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

23 (vi) a representative of the Maryland Higher Education
24 Commission.

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

1 (d) The President of the Senate ~~and~~, the Speaker of the House, **AND THE**
2 **GOVERNOR** shall make all appointments on or before July 1, [2006] **2007**.

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

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

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

9 (h) A member of the Task Force:

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

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

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

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

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

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

23 (4) what services are provided to veterans, veterans' families and
24 survivors and what services need to be provided including medical care, hospice care,
25 and mental health services;

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

1 (6) the feasibility of establishing regional outreach and advocacy
2 centers around the State and using existing service centers as outreach and advocacy
3 centers;

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

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

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

10 (j) The Task Force shall submit an interim report to the Governor and, **IN**
11 **ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1246 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE**, the
12 General Assembly, on or before December 1, [2006] **2007**, and report its final findings
13 and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State
14 Government Article, the General Assembly, on or before December 1, [2007] **2008**.

15 SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
16 June 1, 2006. Section 3 of this Act shall remain effective for a period of [1 year,
17 6 months and 1 day] **3 YEARS** and, at the end of [December 1, 2007] **MAY 31, 2009**,
18 with no further action required by the General Assembly, Section 3 of this Act shall be
19 abrogated and of no further force and effect.

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

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.