

# HOUSE BILL 969

E1, J1

3lr2022

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By: Delegates George, Hixson, Afzali, Anderson, Arora, Aumann, Barnes, Barve, Bates, Beidle, Beitzel, Boteler, Burns, Cane, Carter, Cluster, DeBoy, Donoghue, Eckardt, Elliott, Feldman, Fisher, Frank, Frick, Gilchrist, Glass, Haddaway–Ricchio, Hershey, Hogan, Holmes, Hough, Howard, Ivey, Jacobs, James, Kach, K. Kelly, Kipke, Krebs, Lafferty, Love, McComas, McConkey, McDermott, McDonough, McMillan, A. Miller, W. Miller, Minnick, Nathan–Pulliam, Norman, O’Donnell, Olszewski, Otto, Parrott, Proctor, Ready, Reznik, B. Robinson, Schuh, Schulz, Serafini, Sophocleus, Stein, Stifler, Stocksdales, Stukes, Szeliga, F. Turner, Valentino–Smith, Vitale, Walker, Weir, Wilson, Wood, and Zucker

Introduced and read first time: February 7, 2013

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Commission to Consider Mental Health–Related Ways to Limit Mass Violence**  
3 **by Individuals with Antisocial Personality Disorders, Depressive Disorders,**  
4 **or Other Mental Illness**

5 FOR the purpose of establishing a Commission to Consider Mental Health–Related  
6 Ways to Limit Mass Violence by Individuals with Antisocial Personality  
7 Disorders, Depressive Disorders, or Other Mental Illness; providing for the  
8 composition, chair, and staffing of the Commission; prohibiting a member of the  
9 Commission from receiving certain compensation, but authorizing the  
10 reimbursement of certain expenses; requiring the Commission to study and  
11 make recommendations regarding the prevention of mass violence perpetrated  
12 by individuals with mental illness; requiring the Commission to report its  
13 findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on or  
14 before a certain date; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally  
15 relating to the Commission to Consider Mental Health–Related Ways to Limit  
16 Mass Violence by Individuals with Antisocial Personality Disorders, Depressive  
17 Disorders, or Other Mental Illness.

18 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
19 MARYLAND, That:

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (a) There is a Commission to Consider Mental Health–Related Ways to Limit  
2 Mass Violence by Individuals with Antisocial Personality Disorders, Depressive  
3 Disorders, or Other Mental Illness.

4 (b) The Commission consists of the following members:

5 (1) one member of the Senate of Maryland from the Republican party  
6 and one member of the Senate of Maryland from the Democratic party, appointed by  
7 the President of the Senate;

8 (2) one member of the House of Delegates from the Republican party  
9 and one member of the House of Delegates from the Democratic party, appointed by  
10 the Speaker of the House;

11 (3) the Attorney General, or the Attorney General’s designee;

12 (4) the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene, or the Secretary’s  
13 designee; and

14 (5) the following individuals, appointed by the Governor:

15 (i) two licensed psychologists representing the Maryland  
16 Psychological Association;

17 (ii) two school psychologists, representing the Maryland School  
18 Psychologists’ Association;

19 (iii) one school resource officer; and

20 (iv) one psychiatrist.

21 (c) The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House jointly shall  
22 designate the chair of the Commission.

23 (d) The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene shall provide staff for the  
24 Commission.

25 (e) A member of the Commission:

26 (1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Commission; but

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

29 (f) The Commission shall:

1           (1)   hear professional testimony on pertinent topics, including the  
2 effects of violent video games on individuals who are socially withdrawn and  
3 cognitively involved with the games, and warning signs that individuals who are  
4 at risk of becoming violent may display;

5           (2)   create a process for the identification and referral of at-risk  
6 mentally ill individuals by professional psychologists, school counselors, and teachers  
7 for risk assessment and treatment;

8           (3)   create a plan for providing assistance to individuals who may be in  
9 early stages of regression, as evidenced by identifiable personality changes, increased  
10 aggression, worsening grades, increased absence from work, and social withdrawal,  
11 and for providing security to those to whom the individuals may have access;

12           (4)   create a system whereby individuals in schools or colleges who  
13 display a negative or “dark” affect can be identified and monitored; and

14           (5)   consider and study options for:

15                   (i)   establishing a toll-free number to give anonymous help and  
16 support to parents who feel they have tried all other options and are concerned that  
17 their child:

18                           1.   displays antisocial behavior or a negative or “dark”  
19 affect;

20                           2.   may be at risk of becoming violent; or

21                           3.   displays addictive behavior toward violent video  
22 games;

23                   (ii)   restricting access by minors and certain mentally ill  
24 individuals to violent video games;

25                   (iii)   educating parents on risks associated with the use of violent  
26 video games; and

27                   (iv)   encouraging and helping schools to run violence prevention  
28 programs that teach students:

29                           1.   alternatives to violence;

30                           2.   peaceful conflict resolution;

31                           3.   positive interpersonal relationship skills; and

