
By: Delegates Muse, R. Baker, Beck, Benson, Branch, Cadden, Conroy, Crumlin, Cryor, C. Davis, D. Davis, DeCarlo, Doory, Exum, Frush, Harrison, Heller, Howard, B. Hughes, Kagan, Marriott, C. Mitchell, T. Murphy, Nathan-Pulliam, Oaks, O'Donnell, Opara, Parker, Patterson, Pitkin, Proctor, Rosapepe, Shriver, Valderrama, and Wood

Introduced and read first time: February 7, 1996

Assigned to: Environmental Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force to Study Effect of the Drug Ritalin on School Children**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing a Task Force to Study the Effect of the Drug Ritalin on
4 School Children; providing for the membership, duties, staffing, and termination of
5 the Task Force; requiring a certain report; and generally relating to the
6 establishment of a certain task force.

7 BY adding to

8 Article 41 - Governor - Executive and Administrative Departments
9 Section 18-310
10 Annotated Code of Maryland
11 (1993 Replacement Volume and 1995 Supplement)

12 Preamble

13 WHEREAS, There are between 1.5 million to 2.5 million children in the United
14 States under age 18 who have attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); and

15 WHEREAS, In recent years there has been a dramatic increase in the use of the
16 drug Ritalin to treat ADHD in school aged children, with the number of children taking
17 this drug doubling in the last five years; and

18 WHEREAS, Ritalin, which has a high habit forming potential, may be an effective
19 means of treatment for ADHD in some children by enabling hyperactive children to calm
20 down and to focus more effectively on school tasks; and

21 WHEREAS, For other children use of the drug may be ineffective or produce
22 serious side effects, such as insomnia, nervousness, loss of appetite, weight loss, and
23 palpitations and hallucinations; and

24 WHEREAS, There is concern that ADHD is being over diagnosed and,
25 consequently, that Ritalin is being over prescribed for this condition among school aged
26 children; and

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1 WHEREAS, There is also concern that Ritalin may be underutilized among ADHD
2 children whose condition requires that use of the drug should not be limited only to
3 school settings; and

4 WHEREAS, There is a need to determine the prevalence and the effects of the use
5 of Ritalin among school aged children in Maryland; and

6 WHEREAS, Issues concerning the use of Ritalin in the State by schoolaged
7 children are of concern to both the public health and educational communities; now,
8 therefore,

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

11 **Article 41 - Governor - Executive and Administrative Departments**

12 18-310.

13 (A) THERE IS A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE EFFECT OF THE DRUG RITALIN
14 ON SCHOOL CHILDREN.

15 (B) THE TASK FORCE SHALL BE COMPOSED OF 13 MEMBERS APPOINTED AS
16 FOLLOWS:

17 (1) ONE MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES APPOINTED BY THE
18 SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE;

19 (2) ONE MEMBER OF THE SENATE OF MARYLAND APPOINTED BY THE
20 PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE;

21 (3) ONE MEMBER FROM THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION APPOINTED
22 BY THE GOVERNOR;

23 (4) ONE MEMBER OF THE MARYLAND STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
24 APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR;

25 (5) SEVEN MEMBERS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND
26 MENTAL HYGIENE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR; AND

27 (6) TWO MEMBERS FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC APPOINTED BY THE
28 GOVERNOR.

29 (C) THE GOVERNOR SHALL DESIGNATE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TASK FORCE.

30 (D) THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
31 AND MENTAL HYGIENE JOINTLY SHALL PROVIDE STAFF FOR THE TASK FORCE.

32 (E) A MEMBER OF THE TASK FORCE:

33 (1) MAY NOT RECEIVE COMPENSATION FOR SERVING ON THE TASK
34 FORCE; BUT

35 (2) IS ENTITLED TO REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES UNDER THE
36 STANDARD STATE TRAVEL REGULATIONS, AS PROVIDED IN THE STATE BUDGET.

3

1 (F) THE TASK FORCE:

2 (1) SHALL DETERMINE THE PREVALENCE AND EFFECTS OF THE USE OF
3 RITALIN AMONG SCHOOL AGED CHILDREN IN THE STATE;

4 (2) SHALL DETERMINE THE EXTENT TO WHICH TREATMENTS FOR
5 ATTENTION DEFICIT/HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER OTHER THAN RITALIN ARE
6 GENERALLY AVAILABLE OR IN USE;

7 (3) MAY CONSULT WITH EDUCATION AND HEALTH OFFICIALS AND
8 EXPERTS IN THIS STATE AND IN OTHER STATES AND COUNTRIES;

9 (4) MAY HOLD PUBLIC HEARINGS; AND

10 (5) MAY TAKE ANY OTHER ACTION NECESSARY AND PROPER TO
11 CARRY OUT THE PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION.

12 (G) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 1, 1997, THE TASK FORCE SHALL SUBMIT A
13 REPORT OF ITS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNOR AND,
14 SUBJECT TO § 2-1312 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, TO THE GENERAL
15 ASSEMBLY.

16 (H) THIS SECTION SHALL TERMINATE AND BE OF NO EFFECT AFTER
17 JANUARY 1, 1997.

18 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
19 October 1, 1996.