
By: **Senators Jones, Grosfeld, Britt, Currie, Giannetti, and McFadden**

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2004

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force on Inclusive Child and After-School Care**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force on Inclusive Child and After-School
4 Care; providing for the membership of the Task Force; requiring the Governor to
5 designate the chair of the Task Force; requiring the Child Care Administration
6 to coordinate the staffing of the Task Force; prohibiting certain persons from the
7 receipt of certain compensation, and authorizing the reimbursement of certain
8 expenses; authorizing the Task Force to consult with certain persons; requiring
9 the Task Force to hold public forums for certain purposes; requiring the Task
10 Force to review certain literature and research; requiring the Task Force to
11 develop certain information for the Governor and General Assembly; requiring
12 the Task Force to assist the Governor and State agencies in implementing
13 certain recommendations; authorizing the Task Force to take certain action;
14 providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the Task
15 Force on Inclusive Child and After-School Care.

16 Preamble

17 WHEREAS, There are an estimated 1,377,380 children and youth with
18 disabilities and special health care needs ages birth through 21 in Maryland; and

19 WHEREAS, The Child Care Administration and other State agencies have made
20 efforts to increase the availability and quality of child and after-school care for
21 children and youth with disabilities and special health care needs, yet families of
22 children and youth with disabilities and special health care needs continue to
23 experience discrimination; and

24 WHEREAS, Quantitative and qualitative data indicate that there are systemic
25 barriers to families of children and youth with disabilities and special health care
26 needs obtaining and maintaining quality inclusive child care for their children; and

27 WHEREAS, Families of children and youth with disabilities and special health
28 care needs who are unable to obtain and maintain child care for their children are
29 experiencing financial hardship and family stress; and

1 WHEREAS, Child care professionals working with children and families need to
2 understand their ethical and legal responsibilities to serve children with disabilities
3 and special health care needs; and

4 WHEREAS, Child care professionals need the appropriate knowledge and skills
5 to care for children with disabilities and special health care needs; and

6 WHEREAS, There is a need for interagency coordination to increase the
7 capacity of Maryland's child care system to serve children and youth with disabilities
8 and special health care needs; now, therefore,

9 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
10 MARYLAND, That:

11 (a) There is a Task Force on Inclusive Child and After-School Care.

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

13 (1) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of
14 the Senate;

15 (2) one member of the Maryland House of Delegates, appointed by the
16 Speaker of the House;

17 (3) the Director of the Child Care Administration, or the Director's
18 designee;

19 (4) the Special Secretary of the Governor's Office for Individuals with
20 Disabilities, or the Special Secretary's designee;

21 (5) the Director of the Governor's Office for Individuals with Disabilities,
22 or the Director's designee;

23 (6) the Director of the Developmental Disabilities Administration, or the
24 Director's designee;

25 (7) the Director of the Mental Hygiene Administration, or the Director's
26 designee;

27 (8) the State Assistant Superintendent for Special Education, or the
28 State Assistant Superintendent's designee;

29 (9) four family members of children and youth with disabilities or special
30 health care needs, appointed by the Governor;

31 (10) a representative of the Maryland Committee for Children, appointed
32 by the Governor;

33 (11) a representative of Abilities Network, appointed by the Governor;

1 (12) a representative of the Coalition of Families for Children's Mental
2 Health, appointed by the Governor;

3 (13) a representative of the State Family Child Care Association,
4 appointed by the Governor; and

5 (14) a representative of the State Child Care Association, appointed by
6 the Governor.

7 (c) The Governor shall designate the chair of the Task Force.

8 (d) The Child Care Administration shall coordinate the staffing of the Task
9 Force.

10 (e) A member of the Task Force:

11 (1) may not receive compensation; but

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

14 (f) The Task Force:

15 (1) may consult, on a pro bono basis, with child care, education, and
16 health officials and experts in this State and in other states and countries;

17 (2) shall convene regional public forums to gather information and
18 feedback from families of children and youth with disabilities and special health care
19 needs;

20 (3) shall review the relevant literature and current research and
21 practices related to serving children and youth with disabilities and special health
22 care needs in community child care and after-school care programs;

23 (4) shall develop a report and series of recommendations for the
24 Governor and General Assembly aimed at reducing barriers to quality inclusive child
25 and after-school care for children with disabilities and special health care needs,
26 following "best practices" while complying with federal requirements;

27 (5) shall assist the Governor and State agencies in implementing the
28 recommendations developed by the Task Force;

29 (6) may take any other action necessary and appropriate to carry out the
30 purposes of this section; and

31 (7) shall report its findings, activities, and recommendations to the
32 Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, to the
33 General Assembly on or before July 1, 2005.

34 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
35 July 1, 2004. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and 1 month and, at the

- 1 end of August 1, 2005, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this
- 2 Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.