

HOUSE BILL 1181

P1

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CF SB 873

By: **Delegates Minnick, Aumann, Bohanan, Boteler, Costa, Dwyer, Elliott, Frank, George, Harrison, Howard, Impallaria, Jameson, Krebs, Kullen, Levy, Love, McConkey, McDonough, O'Donnell, Proctor, Shank, Sophocleus, Stocksdale, Stukes, ~~and Wood~~ Wood, Hammen, Beitzel, Benson, Bromwell, Donoghue, Hubbard, Kach, Kipke, Mizeur, Montgomery, Morhaim, Nathan-Pulliam, Oaks, Pena-Melnyk, Pendergrass, Riley, Tarrant, V. Turner, and Weldon**

Introduced and read first time: February 20, 2007

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

Re-referred to: Health and Government Operations, February 26, 2007

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 20, 2007

CHAPTER _____

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

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

3 **Chapter 290 of the Acts of 2006**

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

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

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

- 7 (1) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President
8 of the Senate;
- 9 (2) one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of
10 the House;
- 11 (3) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, or the Secretary's designee;
- 12 (4) the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene, or the Secretary's
13 designee;
- 14 (5) the Adjutant General of the Military, or the Adjutant General's
15 designee; and
- 16 (6) the following seven members, jointly appointed by the President of
17 the Senate and the Speaker of the House:
- 18 (i) one member of the Maryland Congressional Delegation, or
19 the member's designee;
- 20 (ii) one member of the Maryland Veterans Commission;
- 21 (iii) two veterans, one of whom is disabled and one of whom has
22 separated from military service within the past 2 years;
- 23 (iv) one individual who is the surviving spouse or parent of a
24 veteran;
- 25 (v) one individual with knowledge of providing health care
26 services to veterans; and

1 (vi) a representative of the Maryland Higher Education
2 Commission.

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

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

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

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

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

13 (h) A member of the Task Force:

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

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

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

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

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

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

27 (4) what services are provided to veterans, veterans' families and
28 survivors and what services need to be provided including medical care, hospice care,
29 and mental health services;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Approved:

Governor.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.

President of the Senate.