

# HOUSE BILL 1537

R2, P4, P1

9lr3446

---

By: **Delegates Walkup, Haddaway, and Sossi**

Introduced and read first time: March 9, 2009

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

---

## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force to Study the Feasibility of Establishing Teleworking Centers on**  
3 **the Eastern Shore for Chesapeake Bay Bridge Commuters**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing a Task Force to Study the Feasibility of Establishing  
5 Teleworking Centers on the Eastern Shore for Chesapeake Bay Bridge  
6 Commuters; providing for the membership and staffing of the Task Force;  
7 requiring the Governor to designate the chair of the Task Force; requiring the  
8 Task Force to hold its meetings at a certain location; prohibiting members of the  
9 Task Force from receiving certain compensation, but authorizing the  
10 reimbursement of certain expenses; requiring the Task Force to examine,  
11 evaluate, and identify certain matters; requiring the Task Force to report its  
12 findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on or  
13 before a certain date; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally  
14 relating to the Task Force to Study the Feasibility of Establishing Teleworking  
15 Centers on the Eastern Shore for Chesapeake Bay Bridge Commuters.

16 Preamble

17 WHEREAS, Excessive backups routinely occurring on the William Preston  
18 Lane, Jr. Memorial Chesapeake Bay Bridge ("Bay Bridge") during weekday  
19 commuting hours, during summer Friday afternoons, and during emergency lane  
20 closures pose an increasingly serious problem to the Maryland Transportation  
21 Authority and to Eastern Shore residents who work on Maryland's Western Shore;  
22 and

23 WHEREAS, The State promotes teleworking as an effective means to manage  
24 traffic congestion by reducing commuting trips while also reducing air pollution from  
25 auto emissions; and

---

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 WHEREAS, Many employers recognize the benefits of teleworking and either  
2 currently offer, or are willing to offer, eligible employees the opportunity to perform  
3 some work duties offsite; and

4 WHEREAS, Not all employees have the necessary technology or an appropriate  
5 workspace for teleworking within their homes; and

6 WHEREAS, Establishing teleworking centers on Maryland's Eastern Shore can  
7 provide an immediate and practical solution to Bay Bridge congestion by reducing the  
8 number of commuters crossing the Bay Bridge during high-traffic times and provide  
9 alternatives for commuters adversely impacted by emergency Bay Bridge repairs such  
10 as occurred in August 2008; and

11 WHEREAS, Some National Guard armories, such as the one in Salisbury, offer  
12 teleworking facilities, but more teleworking sites are needed on the Upper Eastern  
13 Shore, especially in the Kent Island area; and

14 WHEREAS, Information on the locations and amenities of existing and newly  
15 established teleworking centers needs to be effectively communicated to Eastern Shore  
16 residents as alternatives to their daily commutes across the Bay Bridge; now,  
17 therefore,

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

20 (a) There is a Task Force to Study the Feasibility of Establishing  
21 Teleworking Centers on the Eastern Shore for Chesapeake Bay Bridge Commuters.

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

23 (1) Two members of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the  
24 President of the Senate;

25 (2) Two members of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker  
26 of the House; and

27 (3) The following members appointed by the Governor:

28 (i) The Secretary of Transportation, or the Secretary's designee;

29 (ii) A representative of the Maryland Transportation Authority  
30 Board;

31 (iii) A member of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Citizens' Advisory  
32 Board;

33 (iv) A representative of the Maryland Association of Counties;

1 (v) A representative of the Maryland Municipal League; and

2 (vi) Four members of the general public.

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

4 (d) The Department of Transportation shall provide staff support for the  
5 Task Force.

6 (e) The Task Force shall hold its meetings at Chesapeake College in Wye  
7 Mills, Maryland.

8 (f) A member of the Task Force:

9 (1) May not receive compensation as a member of the Task Force; but

10 (2) Is entitled to reimbursement of expenses under the Standard State  
11 Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

12 (g) The Task Force shall:

13 (1) Examine existing teleworking centers located along the Eastern  
14 Shore's northern Route 50/301 corridor in general, and specifically in Queen Anne's,  
15 Kent, and Talbot counties, and identify other possible teleworking center sites in that  
16 corridor;

17 (2) Evaluate specifically the feasibility of establishing a State-assisted  
18 pilot teleworking center for Bay Bridge commuters at Chesapeake College in Wye  
19 Mills, Maryland; and

20 (3) Identify other possible teleworking centers, formulate projected  
21 operating costs and commuter participation, and suggest promotional outreach  
22 measures for up to 10 teleworking centers on the Eastern Shore that would offer the  
23 greatest potential to:

24 (i) Reduce Friday commuter traffic that mixes with eastbound  
25 vacationers headed to the Atlantic shore between Memorial Day and Labor Day and  
26 produces significant backups on the Bay Bridge and the highways leading to the Bay  
27 Bridge;

28 (ii) Reduce daily traffic congestion during commuting hours on  
29 the Bay Bridge year round; and

30 (iii) Provide temporary alternative work sites for commuters  
31 during emergency closures of the Bay Bridge lanes for maintenance or other causes.

1           (h)    On or before December 31, 2009, the Task Force shall report its findings  
2 and recommendations to the Governor and, subject to § 2-1246 of the State  
3 Government Article, the General Assembly.

4           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
5 July 1, 2009. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of June 30,  
6 2010, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be  
7 abrogated and of no further force and effect.