

SENATE BILL 406

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By: **Senator Pipkin**

Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2011

Assigned to: Finance

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force to Study the Use of Telemedicine in Medically Underserved**
3 **Populations and Areas**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force to Study the Use of Telemedicine in
5 Medically Underserved Populations and Areas; providing for the membership
6 and staffing of the Task Force; requiring the Governor, when making certain
7 appointments, to consult with certain members of the Senate of Maryland;
8 providing for the designation of the chair of the Task Force; prohibiting a
9 member of the Task Force from receiving compensation; authorizing a member
10 of the Task Force to receive certain reimbursement; specifying the duties of the
11 Task Force; requiring the Task Force to make a certain report to the Governor
12 and certain committees of the General Assembly on or before a certain date;
13 providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the Task
14 Force to Study the Use of Telemedicine in Medically Underserved Populations
15 and Areas.

16 Preamble

17 WHEREAS, Telemedicine is the use of medical information exchanged from one
18 site to another via electronic communications to improve a patient's health; and

19 WHEREAS, The federal Health Resources and Services Administration has
20 determined that there are areas and populations throughout the country that have a
21 demonstrable shortage of primary health care resources relative to the needs of the
22 area or population and, therefore, are medically underserved; and

23 WHEREAS, The federal Health Resources and Services Administration has
24 designated portions of Maryland as being medically underserved areas or containing
25 medically underserved populations; and

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 WHEREAS, Telemedicine has been promoted as a way to increase the health
2 care resources in medically underserved populations or areas; and

3 WHEREAS, The purpose of establishing a task force to study the use of
4 telemedicine in medically underserved populations and areas is to determine how
5 telemedicine can best be used to improve the efficiency and reduce the cost of health
6 care and mitigate health disparities in underserved populations and areas of the
7 State; now, therefore,

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

10 (a) There is a Task Force to Study the Use of Telemedicine in Medically
11 Underserved Populations and Areas.

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

13 (1) the Chair of the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental
14 Affairs Committee, or the Chair's designee, who is a member of the Committee;

15 (2) the Chair of the House Health and Government Operations
16 Committee, or the Chair's designee, who is a member of the Committee;

17 (3) the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene, or the Secretary's
18 designee;

19 (4) the Director of Program Development for the Maryland Critical
20 Care Network – University of Maryland Medical System, or the Director's designee;
21 and

22 (5) the following members, appointed by the Governor:

23 (i) two representatives from the medical communities that
24 serve medically underserved populations in the State or are located in medically
25 underserved areas of the State as designated by the federal Health Resources and
26 Services Administration;

27 (ii) two consumer members from medically underserved
28 populations or areas of the State as designated by the federal Health Resources and
29 Services Administration;

30 (iii) two representatives from the health insurance industry; and

31 (iv) one representative from round tables established to study
32 telemedicine and medically underserved areas and populations in the State.

1 (c) When appointing members to the Task Force, the Governor shall consult
2 with the members of the Senate of Maryland who represent the medically underserved
3 populations or areas described in subsection (b)(5) of this section.

4 (d) The Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene shall designate the chair of
5 the Task Force.

6 (e) The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene shall provide staff for the
7 Task Force.

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 for expenses under the Standard
11 State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

12 (g) The Task Force shall:

13 (1) study the impact of the changing physician supply and
14 demographics on the maldistribution of health care services in the State and the
15 increased demand for physicians in medically underserved populations and areas of
16 the State as designated by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration;

17 (2) complete a cost-benefit analysis of the use of telemedicine in the
18 medically underserved populations or areas that includes an analysis of:

19 (i) the implementation and continued use of telemedicine;

20 (ii) the impact of the use of telemedicine on nonhealth related
21 issues, such as the impact on the environment; and

22 (iii) the feasibility and practicality of a unified credentialing
23 system for physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners;

24 (3) collaborate with roundtables established to study telemedicine and
25 medically underserved areas and populations in the State, the Rural Maryland
26 Council, and any other organization that either the Chair of the Senate Education,
27 Health and Environmental Affairs Committee or the Chair of the House Health and
28 Government Operations Committee deems appropriate;

29 (4) review and consider any studies, reports, or other work regarding
30 telemedicine and medically underserved areas and populations of the State completed
31 by the roundtables;

32 (5) study any other topic that the Task Force finds necessary to make
33 recommendations regarding the use of telemedicine in medically underserved
34 populations or areas; and

1 (6) make recommendations regarding the use of telemedicine in
2 medically underserved populations or areas.

3 (h) On or before September 30, 2012, the Task Force shall report its findings
4 and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2–1246 of the State
5 Government Article, the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
6 Committee and the House Health and Government Operations Committee.

7 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
8 October 1, 2011. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of
9 September 30, 2012, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act
10 shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.