

HOUSE BILL 1491

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3lr2942

By: **Delegates Wilson, Minnick, and Weir**

Introduced and read first time: February 27, 2013

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force to Study the Establishment of a Maryland Higher Education**
3 **Grant Program for Veterans**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force to Study the Establishment of a
5 Maryland Higher Education Grant Program for Veterans; providing for the
6 composition, chair, and staffing of the Task Force; prohibiting a member of the
7 Task Force from receiving certain compensation, but authorizing the
8 reimbursement of certain expenses; requiring the Task Force to study and make
9 recommendations regarding the feasibility of establishing a higher education
10 grant program for veterans and the qualifications for eligibility for a grant;
11 requiring the Task Force to report its findings and recommendations to certain
12 committees of the General Assembly on or before a certain date; providing for
13 the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the Task Force to Study
14 the Establishment of a Maryland Higher Education Grant Program for
15 Veterans.

16 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
17 MARYLAND, That:

18 (a) There is a Task Force to Study the Establishment of a Maryland Higher
19 Education Grant Program for Veterans.

20 (b) The Task Force consists of the following 11 members:

21 (1) two members of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the
22 President of the Senate;

23 (2) two members of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker
24 of the House;

25 (3) the Secretary of Higher Education, or the Secretary's designee;

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (4) the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs, or
2 the Secretary's designee; and

3 (5) the following five members, appointed by the Governor:

4 (i) one representative of the Office of Student Financial
5 Assistance of the Maryland Higher Education Commission;

6 (ii) one representative of the Maryland Association of
7 Community Colleges;

8 (iii) one representative of an organization of honorably
9 discharged veterans of the United States armed forces;

10 (iv) one representative of an organization of active duty
11 members of the United States armed forces; and

12 (v) one representative of the Maryland National Guard.

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

14 (d) The Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs shall provide staff for the
15 Task Force.

16 (e) A member of the Task Force:

17 (1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Task Force; but

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

20 (f) The Task Force shall:

21 (1) study the feasibility of establishing in the State a higher education
22 grant program that would provide a grant for tuition and mandatory fees at an eligible
23 public institution of higher education in the State for the equivalent of 4 academic
24 years of full-time enrollment for:

25 (i) an honorably discharged veteran of the United States armed
26 forces, as defined in § 9-901 of the State Government Article, who has served at least
27 1 year of federal active duty service;

28 (ii) an individual who has served on federal active duty service
29 in a foreign country during a time of hostility in the country, regardless of length of
30 service, who was honorably discharged, who was medically discharged for
31 service-related reasons, or who was discharged before August 11, 1967; or

1 (iii) an individual who is a member of the Maryland National
2 Guard or a reserve component of the United States armed forces;

3 (2) identify the qualifications for eligibility of an individual for a grant,
4 including the following criteria:

5 (i) 1. was a resident of Maryland at the time of entering
6 active duty service in the United States armed forces; or

7 2. was a student at a public institution of higher
8 education in the State at the time of entering active duty service in the United States
9 armed forces;

10 (ii) 1. has established plans to establish residency in the
11 State within 6 months after leaving federal active duty service; or

12 2. is married to an individual in continued military
13 service and has applied for a grant within 6 months after the date that the spouse was
14 stationed in the State or if the spouse was stationed outside the State, has established
15 or plans to establish residency in the State within 6 months after the date the spouse
16 was separated from military service;

17 (iii) resides in the State unless the individual is serving federal
18 active duty service at the time of enrollment in college or residing with a spouse in
19 continued military service who is currently stationed outside the State; and

20 (iv) is not in default on any student loan; and

21 (3) make recommendations regarding the feasibility of establishing a
22 Maryland Higher Education Grant Program for Veterans and the qualifications for
23 eligibility of an individual for a grant.

24 (g) On or before December 15, 2013, the Task Force shall report its findings
25 and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State
26 Government Article, the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
27 Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee.

28 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
29 June 1, 2013. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of May 31,
30 2014, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be
31 abrogated and of no further force and effect.