

# SENATE BILL 52

P1

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(PRE-FILED)

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By: **Senator Benson**

Requested: November 4, 2013

Introduced and read first time: January 8, 2014

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force to Study Services and Resources Provided by the Department of**  
3 **Veterans Affairs**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force to Study Services and Resources  
5 Provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs; providing for the composition,  
6 chair, and staffing of the Task Force; prohibiting a member of the Task Force  
7 from receiving certain compensation, but authorizing the reimbursement of  
8 certain expenses; requiring the Task Force to study and make recommendations  
9 regarding certain matters; requiring the Task Force to report its findings and  
10 recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before a  
11 certain date; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to  
12 the Task Force to Study Services and Resources Provided by the Department of  
13 Veterans Affairs.

14 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
15 MARYLAND, That:

16 (a) There is a Task Force to Study Services and Resources Provided by the  
17 Department of Veterans Affairs.

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

19 (1) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President  
20 of the Senate;

21 (2) one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of  
22 the House;

23 (3) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, or the Secretary's designee; and

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1           (4) four representatives from veteran organizations located in the  
2 State, appointed by the Governor.

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

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

6           (e) A member of the Task Force:

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

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

10          (f) The Task Force shall:

11               (1) study the services and resources provided by the Department of  
12 Veterans Affairs and issues that affect the ability of veterans residing in the State to  
13 access the services and resources; and

14               (2) make recommendations regarding how to improve the services and  
15 resources provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs to veterans residing in the  
16 State, including:

17                       (i) lowering the case loads of employees who work with  
18 veterans to address their needs;

19                       (ii) offering more privacy to veterans who are discussing  
20 personal needs and issues with employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

21                       (iii) decreasing the amount of time veterans wait for services  
22 from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

23          (g) On or before December 31, 2014, the Task Force shall report its findings  
24 and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State  
25 Government Article, the General Assembly.

26          SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
27 June 1, 2014. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and 1 month and, at the  
28 end of June 30, 2015, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this  
29 Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.