

# HOUSE BILL 997

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By: **Delegates Brooks, Anderson, Bhandari, Carey, Charles, Crutchfield, Forbes, Haynes, Hettleman, C. Jackson, McComas, Sample–Hughes, and P. Young**

Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2020

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force to Study Veterans' Suicide Causes and Prevention**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force to Study Veterans' Suicide Causes and  
4 Prevention; providing for the composition, chair, and staffing of the Task Force;  
5 prohibiting a member of the Task Force from receiving certain compensation, but  
6 authorizing reimbursement of certain expenses; requiring the Task Force to study  
7 certain issues related to veterans' suicide in the State; requiring the Task Force to  
8 coordinate and communicate with certain groups in completing a certain study;  
9 requiring the Task Force to make certain recommendations; requiring the Task  
10 Force to submit an interim and a final report to the Governor and the General  
11 Assembly on or before certain dates; providing for the termination of this Act; and  
12 generally relating to the Task Force to Study Veterans' Suicide Causes and  
13 Prevention.

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

15 That:

16 (a) There is a Task Force to Study Veterans' Suicide Causes and Prevention.

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

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

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

22 (3) one representative from the Department of Veterans Affairs,  
23 designated by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs;

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (4) one representative from the Maryland Department of Health,  
2 designated by the Secretary of Health;

3 (5) one representative from the Department of Human Services,  
4 designated by the Secretary of Human Services;

5 (6) one member who is a veteran, appointed by the Secretary of Veterans  
6 Affairs;

7 (7) one member who is a veteran, appointed by the Secretary of Health;  
8 and

9 (8) the following members, appointed by the Governor:

10 (i) one member who is a veteran; and

11 (ii) one member who is a mental health professional.

12 (c) The members of the Task Force shall designate the chair of the Task Force.

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

14 (e) A member of the Task Force:

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

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

18 (f) The Task Force shall:

19 (1) study the causes of and methods for preventing suicide by veterans who  
20 reside in the State;

21 (2) coordinate and communicate with relevant veteran nonprofit groups in  
22 the State in completing the study required under item (1) of this subsection; and

23 (3) make recommendations for the prevention of suicide by veterans in the  
24 State.

25 (g) (1) On or before October 1, 2021, the Task Force shall submit an interim  
26 report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with §  
27 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

28 (2) On or before December 31, 2021, the Task Force shall submit a final  
29 report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with §  
30 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

1           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
2 1, 2020. It shall remain effective for a period of 2 years and, at the end of June 30, 2022,  
3 this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and  
4 of no further force and effect.