

# HOUSE BILL 1181

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CF SB 781

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By: **Delegate Baker**

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2025

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force on the Establishment of a State Park Dedicated to Veterans' Care**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force on the Establishment of a State Park  
4 Dedicated to Veterans' Care to study issues and estimate costs related to the  
5 establishment of a State park dedicated to providing recreational opportunities and  
6 therapeutic services to veterans; and generally relating to the Task Force on the  
7 Establishment of a State Park Dedicated to Veterans' Care.

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

10 (a) There is a Task Force on the Establishment of a State Park Dedicated to  
11 Veterans' Care.

12 (b) (1) The Task Force shall include the following members:

13 (i) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the  
14 President of the Senate;

15 (ii) one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker  
16 of the House;

17 (iii) the Secretary of Natural Resources, or the Secretary's designee;

18 (iv) the Secretary of Veterans and Military Families, or the  
19 Secretary's designee;

20 (v) the Director of the Maryland Park Service, or the Director's  
21 designee;

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (vi) one county commissioner of Washington County, appointed by  
2 the President of the Washington County Board of Commissioners;

3 (vii) the County Administrator of Washington County, or the County  
4 Administrator's designee;

5 (viii) the following members, appointed by the Secretary of Natural  
6 Resources:

7 1. one representative of the Hagerstown–Washington  
8 County Convention and Visitors Bureau;

9 2. one representative of an organization that provides  
10 therapeutic services to veterans; and

11 3. the owner of land located in the Southern portion of  
12 Washington County that has been proposed for transfer to the State for the purpose of  
13 establishing a State park dedicated to veterans' care; and

14 (ix) one resident from legislative district 2 in Washington County.

15 (2) In addition to the members specified under paragraph (1) of this  
16 subsection, the Secretary of Natural Resources may invite a representative of the National  
17 Park Service and any other relevant stakeholders to serve as members of the Task Force.

18 (c) The Secretary of Natural Resources shall designate the chair of the Task  
19 Force.

20 (d) The Department of Natural Resources shall provide staff for the Task Force.

21 (e) A member of the Task Force:

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

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

25 (f) The Task Force shall:

26 (1) study issues and estimate costs related to the establishment of a State  
27 park dedicated to providing recreational opportunities and therapeutic services to veterans;

28 (2) make recommendations regarding:

29 (i) services and amenities to be provided by the park;

1 (ii) operational models for the park, including how operational and  
2 maintenance responsibilities could be shared between the Maryland Park Service and  
3 partner organizations;

4 (iii) options for funding the initial start-up costs of the park,  
5 including infrastructure and capital costs; and

6 (iv) self-sustaining funding models for the ongoing operational costs  
7 of the park; and

8 (3) develop an action plan identifying next steps for the establishment of  
9 the park.

10 (g) On or before December 1, 2026, the Task Force shall report its findings and  
11 recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State  
12 Government Article, the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee and  
13 the House Environment and Transportation Committee.

14 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
15 1, 2025. It shall remain effective for a period of 2 years and, at the end of June 30, 2027,  
16 this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and  
17 of no further force and effect.