

# HOUSE BILL 780

D4  
HB 1389/14 – JUD

5lr1781

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By: **Delegates McComas, Arentz, Carozza, Cassilly, Chang, Kittleman, Krebs, Lam, Mautz, McConkey, McMillan, Metzgar, Miele, Platt, B. Robinson, S. Robinson, Shoemaker, Szeliga, Vogt, and B. Wilson**

Introduced and read first time: February 13, 2015

Assigned to: Judiciary

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force on the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force on the Prevention of Child Abuse and  
4 Neglect; 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 the reimbursement of certain expenses; requiring the Task Force to  
7 study and make recommendations regarding certain matters; requiring the Task  
8 Force to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General  
9 Assembly on or before a certain date; providing for the termination of this Act; and  
10 generally relating to child abuse and neglect.

11 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
12 That:

13 (a) There is a Task Force on the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect.

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

15 (1) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of  
16 the Senate;

17 (2) one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the  
18 House;

19 (3) the State Superintendent of Education, or the Superintendent's  
20 designee;

21 (4) the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene, or the Secretary's  
22 designee;

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



- 1           (5)    the Secretary of Human Resources, or the Secretary’s designee;
- 2           (6)    one representative of the Governor’s Office for Children; and
- 3           (7)    the following members, appointed by the Governor:
- 4                   (i)    one representative of the Governor’s Office of Crime Control and  
5 Prevention;
- 6                   (ii)   one representative of the State Council on Child Abuse and  
7 Neglect;
- 8                   (iii)  one representative of the Maryland Court–Appointed Special  
9 Advocate Program;
- 10                  (iv)   one representative of nonpublic school employees with expertise  
11 regarding the current operations and training practices within nonpublic schools on the  
12 prevention, identification, and reporting of child abuse and neglect;
- 13                  (v)    one representative of the Maryland Coalition Against Sexual  
14 Assault;
- 15                  (vi)   one representative of Maryland Child Abuse Medical Providers  
16 or the Maryland Psychological Association;
- 17                  (vii)  one representative of the Maryland Children’s Alliance;
- 18                  (viii) one representative of an organization representing law  
19 enforcement;
- 20                  (ix)   one representative of the Maryland chapter of the National  
21 Association of Social Workers;
- 22                  (x)    one representative of the Maryland Clinical Social Work  
23 Coalition;
- 24                  (xi)   one representative of the Maryland State’s Attorneys’  
25 Association; and
- 26                  (xii)  up to three members of the general public who are actively  
27 involved in the field of child protection.
- 28           (c)    The membership of the Task Force shall reasonably reflect the geographic  
29 diversity of the State.
- 30           (d)    The Governor shall designate the chair of the Task Force.

1 (e) The Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention shall provide staff for  
2 the Task Force with assistance from the State Council on Child Abuse and Neglect.

3 (f) A member of the Task Force:

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

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

7 (g) The Task Force shall:

8 (1) hold hearings throughout the State and receive testimony from  
9 individuals, State and local agencies, community-based organizations, and other public  
10 and private organizations;

11 (2) invite representatives from interested stakeholder groups, including  
12 child abuse survivors, caseworkers, mental health professionals, foster care providers, and  
13 representatives of religious organizations, to testify at public meetings held at various  
14 locations throughout the State;

15 (3) study:

16 (i) child abuse and neglect cases throughout the State; and

17 (ii) best practices throughout the United States regarding laws and  
18 systems designed to protect children and prevent child abuse and neglect; and

19 (4) make recommendations regarding:

20 (i) goals for State policies to prevent child abuse and neglect;

21 (ii) whether changes to the State's child abuse and neglect laws  
22 should be made, including whether criminal penalties should be established for the  
23 intentional failure to report child abuse or neglect;

24 (iii) methods for improving systems for reporting child abuse and  
25 neglect;

26 (iv) methods to foster excellence among multidisciplinary teams  
27 investigating child abuse and neglect and cooperation among State agencies and between  
28 the State and local governments that handle child abuse and neglect cases;

29 (v) methods for improving access to medical care and mental health  
30 services and treatment;

1 (vi) methods for increasing public awareness about child abuse and  
2 neglect;

3 (vii) methods for increasing funding to prevent and address childhood  
4 trauma;

5 (viii) methods for improving the training of professionals described in  
6 § 5–704 of the Family Law Article on the reporting of child abuse and neglect; and

7 (ix) methods to adopt and implement policies addressing the  
8 prevention of child abuse that may include age–appropriate curricula for students in  
9 prekindergarten through fifth grade.

10 (h) On or before December 1, 2015, the Task Force shall report its findings and  
11 recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2–1246 of the State  
12 Government Article, the General Assembly.

13 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June  
14 1, 2015. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and 1 month and, at the end of June  
15 30, 2016, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be  
16 abrogated and of no further force and effect.