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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-SECOND SESSION

H. F. No. 952

02/10/2021 Authored by Richardson and Hansen, R., The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Public Safety and Criminal Justice Reform Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to public safety; creating the Task Force on Missing and Murdered African
1.3 American Women; requiring an annual report on issues related to violence against
1.4 African American women and girls; appropriating money for the Task Force on
1.5 Missing and Murdered African American Women.

1.6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.7 Section 1. TASK FORCE ON MISSING AND MURDERED AFRICAN AMERICAN
1.8 WOMEN.

1.9 Subdivision 1. Creation and duties. (a) By September 1, 2021, the commissioner, in
1.10 consultation with the Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage, shall appoint members
1.11 to the Task Force on Missing and Murdered African American Women to advise the
1.12 commissioner and report to the legislature on recommendations to reduce and end violence
1.13 against African American women and girls in Minnesota. The task force may also serve as
1.14 a liaison between the commissioner and agencies and nongovernmental organizations that
1.15 provide services to victims, victims' families, and victims' communities. Task force members
1.16 may receive expense reimbursement as specified in Minnesota Statutes, section 15.059,
1.17 subdivision 6.

1.18 (b) The Task Force on Missing and Murdered African American Women must examine
1.19 and report on the following:

1.20 (1) the systemic causes behind violence that African American women and girls
1.21 experience, including patterns and underlying factors that explain why disproportionately
1.22 high levels of violence occur against African American women and girls, including

2.1 underlying historical, social, economic, institutional, and cultural factors which may
 2.2 contribute to the violence;

2.3 (2) appropriate methods for tracking and collecting data on violence against African
 2.4 American women and girls, including data on missing and murdered African American
 2.5 women and girls;

2.6 (3) policies and institutions such as policing, child welfare, coroner practices, and other
 2.7 governmental practices that impact violence against African American women and girls
 2.8 and the investigation and prosecution of crimes of gender violence against African American
 2.9 people;

2.10 (4) measures necessary to address and reduce violence against African American women
 2.11 and girls; and

2.12 (5) measures to help victims, victims' families, and victims' communities prevent and
 2.13 heal from violence that occurs against African American women and girls.

2.14 (c) For the purposes of this section, "commissioner" means the commissioner of public
 2.15 safety and "nongovernmental organizations" means nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations
 2.16 that provide legal, social, or other community services.

2.17 Subd. 2. **Membership.** (a) To the extent practicable, the Task Force on Missing and
 2.18 Murdered African American Women shall consist of the following individuals, or their
 2.19 designees, who are knowledgeable in crime victims' rights or violence protection and, unless
 2.20 otherwise specified, members shall be appointed by the commissioner:

2.21 (1) two members of the senate, one appointed by the majority leader and one appointed
 2.22 by the minority leader;

2.23 (2) two members of the house of representatives, one appointed by the speaker of the
 2.24 house and one appointed by the minority leader;

2.25 (3) two representatives from among the following:

2.26 (i) the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association;

2.27 (ii) the Minnesota Sheriffs' Association;

2.28 (iii) the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension; or

2.29 (iv) the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association;

2.30 (4) one or more representatives from among the following:

2.31 (i) the Minnesota County Attorneys Association;

3.1 (ii) the United States Attorney's Office; or

3.2 (iii) a judge or attorney working in juvenile court;

3.3 (5) a county coroner or a representative from a statewide coroner's association or a
3.4 representative of the Department of Health; and

3.5 (6) three or more representatives from among the following:

3.6 (i) a statewide or local organization that provides legal services to African American
3.7 women and girls;

3.8 (ii) a statewide or local organization that provides advocacy or counseling for African
3.9 American women and girls who have been victims of violence;

3.10 (iii) a statewide or local organization that provides services to African American women
3.11 and girls; or

3.12 (iv) an African American woman who is a survivor of gender violence.

3.13 (b) Members of the task force serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority or until
3.14 the task force expires. Vacancies in commissioner-appointed positions shall be filled by the
3.15 commissioner consistent with the qualifications of the vacating member required by this
3.16 subdivision.

3.17 Subd. 3. **Officers; meetings.** (a) The task force members shall annually elect a chair
3.18 and vice-chair from among the task force's members, and may elect other officers as
3.19 necessary. The task force shall meet at least quarterly, or upon the call of its chair, and may
3.20 hold meetings throughout the state. The task force shall meet sufficiently enough to
3.21 accomplish the tasks identified in this section. Meetings of the task force are subject to
3.22 Minnesota Statutes, chapter 13D. The task force shall seek out and enlist the cooperation
3.23 and assistance of nongovernmental organizations; community and advocacy organizations
3.24 working with the African American community; and academic researchers and experts,
3.25 specifically those specializing in violence against African American women and girls, those
3.26 representing diverse communities disproportionately affected by violence against women
3.27 and girls, or those focusing on issues related to gender violence and violence against African
3.28 American women and girls.

3.29 (b) The commissioner shall convene the first meeting of the task force no later than
3.30 October 1, 2021, and shall provide meeting space and administrative assistance as necessary
3.31 for the task force to conduct its work.

4.1 Subd. 4. **Report.** The task force shall report to the chairs and ranking minority members
4.2 of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over public safety, human services, and state
4.3 government on the work of the task force, including but not limited to the issues to be
4.4 examined in subdivision 1, and shall include in the report institutional policies and practices
4.5 or proposed institutional policies and practices that are effective in reducing gender violence
4.6 and increasing the safety of African American women and girls. The report shall include
4.7 recommendations to reduce and end violence against African American women and girls
4.8 and help victims and communities heal from gender violence and violence against African
4.9 American women and girls. The report shall be submitted to the legislative committees by
4.10 December 15, 2022.

4.11 Subd. 5. **Expiration.** Notwithstanding Minnesota Statutes, section 15.059, the task force
4.12 expires December 31, 2022.

4.13 Sec. 2. **FUNDING FOR THE TASK FORCE ON MISSING AND MURDERED**
4.14 **AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN; APPROPRIATION.**

4.15 \$..... in fiscal year 2022 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of
4.16 public safety to implement the Task Force on Missing and Murdered African American
4.17 Women under section 1.