

SENATE BILL 975

J1, C3

8lr3168

By: **Senator Nathan–Pulliam**

Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2018

Assigned to: Finance

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force to Study Drug Addiction as a Chronic Disease**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force to Study Drug Addiction as a Chronic
4 Disease; 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 the Task Force to Study Drug Addiction as a Chronic Disease.

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

13 (a) There is a Task Force to Study Drug Addiction as a Chronic Disease.

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

15 (1) the Secretary of Health, or the Secretary's designee; and

16 (2) the following members, appointed jointly by the President of the Senate
17 and the Speaker of the House of Delegates:

18 (i) one licensed professional counselor specializing in substance use
19 treatment;

20 (ii) one therapist specializing in substance use treatment;

21 (iii) one nurse practitioner;

22 (iv) one community health worker;

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



- 1 (v) one social worker;
- 2 (vi) one drug and alcohol administrator who is a medical doctor;
- 3 (vii) one pastoral counselor;
- 4 (viii) one member of Alcoholics Anonymous;
- 5 (ix) one member of Narcotics Anonymous;
- 6 (x) one member of the League of Life and Health Insurers of
7 Maryland;
- 8 (xi) one parent of a drug addict; and
- 9 (xii) one recovering drug addict.
- 10 (c) The members of the Task Force shall designate the chair of the Task Force.
- 11 (d) The Maryland Department of Health shall provide staff for the Task Force.
- 12 (e) A member of the Task Force:
- 13 (1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Task Force; but
- 14 (2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State
15 Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.
- 16 (f) The Task Force shall:
- 17 (1) study:
- 18 (i) issues related to drug addiction, including addiction to:
- 19 1. opioids;
- 20 2. cocaine;
- 21 3. crack cocaine;
- 22 4. heroin;
- 23 5. alcohol; and
- 24 6. prescription painkillers;

- 1 (ii) the number of emergency room visits and deaths related to drug
2 addiction;
- 3 (iii) Maryland economic and health care costs related to drug
4 addiction;
- 5 (iv) the number of families negatively impacted by drug addiction;
- 6 (v) the portion of the unemployment rate attributable to the
7 unemployment of individuals with criminal records involving drug-related crimes;
- 8 (vi) recidivism rates related to drug addiction;
- 9 (vii) physical and mental health issues caused by drug addiction;
- 10 (viii) homelessness due to drug addiction;
- 11 (ix) deep-seated physiological problems due to drug addiction;
- 12 (x) the lack of health insurance coverage for addiction treatment;
- 13 (xi) the exacerbation and remission status of chronic diseases similar
14 to drug addiction such as diabetes, cancer, and cardiovascular disease;
- 15 (xii) ways to promote early detection of diseases, such as hepatitis C,
16 related to drug addiction; and
- 17 (xiii) the number of an individual's failed treatment attempts; and
- 18 (2) make recommendations on whether the State should recognize drug
19 addiction as a chronic disease and any other findings of the Task Force.

20 (g) On or before April 1, 2020, the Task Force shall report its findings and
21 recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State
22 Government Article, the Senate Finance Committee and the House Health and
23 Government Operations Committee.

24 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
25 October 1, 2018. It shall remain effective for a period of 2 years and, at the end of September
26 30, 2020, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be
27 abrogated and of no further force and effect.