

# HOUSE BILL 1389

D4  
HB 1186/13 – JUD

4lr3017

---

By: **Delegate McComas**

Introduced and read first time: February 12, 2014

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

---

## 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,  
6 but authorizing the reimbursement of certain expenses; requiring the Task  
7 Force to study and make recommendations regarding certain matters; requiring  
8 the Task Force to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and  
9 the General Assembly on or before a certain date; providing for the termination  
10 of this Act; and generally relating to child abuse and neglect.

11 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
12 MARYLAND, 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  
16 of the Senate;

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

23 (5) the Secretary of Human Resources, or the Secretary's designee;

---

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (6) one representative of the Governor's Office for Children; and

2 (7) the following members, appointed by the Governor:

3 (i) one representative of the Governor's Office of Crime Control  
4 and Prevention;

5 (ii) one representative of the State Council on Child Abuse and  
6 Neglect;

7 (iii) one representative of the Maryland Court–Appointed Special  
8 Advocate Program;

9 (iv) one representative of nonpublic school employees with  
10 expertise regarding the current operations and training practices within nonpublic  
11 schools on the prevention, identification, and reporting of child abuse and neglect;

12 (v) one representative of the Maryland Coalition Against Sexual  
13 Assault;

14 (vi) one representative of Maryland Child Abuse Medical  
15 Providers or the Maryland Psychological Association;

16 (vii) one representative of the Maryland Children's Alliance;

17 (viii) one representative of an organization representing law  
18 enforcement;

19 (ix) one representative of the Maryland chapter of the National  
20 Association of Social Workers;

21 (x) one clinical social worker with experience working with  
22 abused and neglected children;

23 (xi) one representative of the Maryland State's Attorneys'  
24 Association; and

25 (xii) up to three members of the general public who are actively  
26 involved in the field of child protection.

27 (c) The membership of the Task Force shall reasonably reflect the  
28 geographic diversity of the State.

29 (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  
2 for 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  
6 State 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  
10 public and private organizations;

11 (2) invite representatives from interested stakeholder groups,  
12 including child abuse survivors, caseworkers, mental health professionals, foster care  
13 providers, and representatives of religious organizations, to testify at public meetings  
14 held at various 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  
18 and 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  
28 between the State and local governments that handle child abuse and neglect cases;

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

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

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

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

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

11 (h) On or before December 1, 2014, the Task Force shall report its findings  
12 and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2–1246 of the State  
13 Government Article, the General Assembly.

14 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
15 June 1, 2014. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and 1 month and, at the  
16 end of June 30, 2015, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this  
17 Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.