

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2021 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 775 (Delegate Kittleman)
 Health and Government Operations

Task Force to Study the Establishment of Regional Centers for Women Veterans

This bill establishes the Task Force to Study the Establishment of Regional Centers for Women Veterans. The task force must (1) study existing resources available to women veterans in the State; (2) study the population count of women veterans in each county; (3) study the specific needs of women veterans; (4) study the characteristics and effectiveness of existing centers for women veterans in other jurisdictions; and (5) make recommendations to address identified specific needs for services for women veterans in the State. The Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) must provide staff to the task force. Members may not receive compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses under standard State travel regulations. By October 1, 2022, the task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly. **The bill takes effect October 1, 2021, and terminates October 31, 2022.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$31,200 in FY2022 and \$10,500 in FY 2023 for contractual staff. Reimbursements for task force members are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	31,200	10,500	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$31,200)	(\$10,500)	\$0	\$0	\$0

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease

Local Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect local government operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: MDVA delivers services and programs to assist Maryland veterans, their families, and survivors in obtaining State, federal, and local benefits provided by law in recognition for their service. MDVA also assures the maintenance of veterans' cemeteries and memorials to honor Maryland veterans. MDVA also engages in public awareness and outreach to veterans, their families, and other stakeholders to further engage and encourage statewide participation in addressing problems faced by Maryland veterans. MDVA also manages Charlotte Hall Veterans Home, an assisted living and skilled nursing facility for veterans and their eligible spouses who are unable to care for themselves due to disability, advancing age, or who have requirements for nursing home care.

State Expenditures: MDVA general fund expenditures increase by \$31,246 in fiscal 2022, which accounts for the bill's October 1, 2021 effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring one contractual veterans affairs policy analyst to staff the task force and produce the mandatory report. It includes a salary, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses. MDVA advises that the department is unable to absorb additional duties and has determined that one temporary contractual staffer is needed to implement the bill. The Department of Legislative Services concurs.

	<u>FY 2022</u>	<u>FY2023</u>
Contractual Position	1.0	(1.0)
Salary and Fringe Benefits	\$25,665	\$10,252
Operating Expenses	<u>5,581</u>	<u>216</u>
Total MDVA Expenditures	\$31,246	\$10,468

In fiscal 2023, MDVA general fund expenditures increase by \$10,468, which reflects elimination of the contractual position on October 31, 2022, concurrent with termination of the task force.

This estimate does not include any health insurance costs that could be incurred for specified contractual employees under the State's implementation of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 1600 of 2020 was referred to the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee, but no further action was taken.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Veterans Affairs; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 1, 2021
rh/jc

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