

SENATE, No. 1400

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 13, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator JOSEPH PENNACCHIO

District 26 (Essex, Morris and Passaic)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes task force to study issues facing returning members of US Armed Forces, NJ National Guard, and reserve component of US Armed Forces and make recommendations to State on issues.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **AN ACT** establishing a task force on issues and concerns of
2 returning members of the United States Armed Forces, New
3 Jersey National Guard, and of a reserve component of the United
4 States Armed Forces.

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6 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
7 *of New Jersey:*

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9 1. There is established in the Department of Military and
10 Veterans Affairs a task force to consist of the following 13
11 members: the Commissioners of Education, Labor and Workforce
12 Development, Health and Senior Services and Human Services, or
13 their designees, serving as ex officio members; the Chairperson of
14 the Civil Service Commission, or a designee, serving as an ex
15 officio member; the Adjutant General of the Department of Military
16 and Veterans Affairs; a member of the Jewish War Veterans of the
17 United States, Department of New Jersey; and a member of the
18 Veterans' Services Council, as established by section 22 of
19 P.L.1948, c.448 (C.13:1B-20). The Adjutant General shall appoint
20 five public members, with at least three persons with knowledge or
21 experience in one of the following areas: demobilization and post
22 deployment; post traumatic stress disorder, family readiness groups
23 or family assistance centers; employer support groups; veterans
24 service officers; issues relevant to women in the military and
25 veteran homeless shelters.

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27 2. All appointments to the task force shall be made within 30
28 days after the effective date of this act. Vacancies in the
29 membership of the task force shall be filled in the same manner as
30 the original appointments were made. The public members of the
31 task force shall serve without compensation, but shall be
32 reimbursed for necessary expenditures incurred in the performance
33 of their duties as members of the task force.

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35 3. The task force shall organize as soon as may be practicable
36 after the appointment of its members and shall choose a chairperson
37 from among its members. The task force shall appoint a secretary
38 who need not be a member of the task force.

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40 4. The task force shall meet at the call of the chairperson. The
41 task force shall hold at least three public hearings in different parts
42 of the State and elicit testimony from the public at such times and
43 places as the chair shall designate. A meeting of the task force shall
44 be called at the request of five of the task force's members and five
45 members of the task force shall constitute a quorum at any meeting
46 thereof.

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1 5. The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs shall
2 provide such clerical and other administrative assistants, and such
3 professional staff, as the task force requires to carry out its work.

5 6. It shall be the duty of the task force to identify and review
6 the issues and concerns facing members of the United States Armed
7 Forces, New Jersey National Guard, and of a reserve component of
8 the United States Armed Forces returning from overseas
9 deployments involving the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and
10 recommend the measures the State should take to address and
11 remedy the issues and concerns, including legislation if appropriate.
12 For its deliberations, the task force shall:

13 a. examine current data, research, programs, and initiatives
14 related to the physical, social, emotional and mental impact of
15 military service upon servicemembers and their families;

b. identify effective strategies for promoting lifelong physical, social, emotional and mental health of servicemembers and their families; and

19 c. develop recommendations to implement those strategies,
20 including legislation if appropriate.

7. The task force shall issue a final report containing its findings and recommendations, including any recommendations for legislation that it deems appropriate, no later than six months after the task force organizes.

27 8. This act shall take effect immediately and the task force
28 shall expire 30 days after issuance of its final report.

STATEMENT

33 This bill establishes a task force in the Department of Military
34 and Veterans Affairs to address issues facing members of the
35 United States Armed Forces, New Jersey National Guard, and of a
36 reserve component of the United States Armed Forces returning
37 from overseas deployments involving the wars in Afghanistan and
38 Iraq and make recommendations on how the State should address
39 those issues. The task force will consist of the following 13
40 members: the Commissioners of Education, Labor and Workforce
41 Development, Health and Senior Services, and Human Services, or
42 their designees; the Chairperson of the Civil Service Commission,
43 or a designee; the Adjutant General of the Department of Military
44 and Veterans Affairs; a member of the Jewish War Veterans of the
45 United States, Department of New Jersey; and a member of the
46 Veterans' Services Council. The Adjutant General will appoint five
47 public members, with at least three persons with knowledge or
48 experience in one of the following areas: demobilization and post

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1 deployment; post traumatic stress disorder, family readiness groups
2 or family assistance centers; employer support groups; veterans
3 service officers; issues relevant to women in the military and
4 veteran homeless shelters.

5 It will be the duty of the task force to identify and review the
6 issues and concerns facing servicemembers returning from overseas
7 deployments, and recommend the measures the State should take to
8 address and remedy the issues and concerns, including legislation if
9 appropriate.

10 The task force will issue a final report containing its findings and
11 recommendations, including any recommendations for legislation
12 that it deems appropriate, no later than six months after the task
13 force organizes.