

Chapter 9

(House Bill 55)

AN ACT concerning

Maryland Commission on Veterans and Military Families

FOR the purpose of establishing the Maryland Commission on Veterans and Military Families to study developing and implementing a strategic plan to make Maryland the best state for veterans and military families; and generally relating to the Maryland Commission on Veterans and Military Families.

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

- (a) There is a Commission on Veterans and Military Families.
- (b) The Commission consists of the following members:
 - (1) the following members, appointed by the President of the Senate:
 - (i) a member of the Senate of Maryland who is also a member of the Maryland Senate Veterans Caucus;
 - (ii) a former member of the Senate of Maryland who is also a former member of the Maryland Senate Veterans Caucus; and
 - (iii) a representative of an organization that advocates on behalf of veterans and military families;
 - (2) the following members, appointed by the Speaker of the House:
 - (i) a member of the House of Delegates who is also a member of the Maryland House Veterans Caucus;
 - (ii) a former member of the House of Delegates who is also a former member of the Maryland House Veterans Caucus; and
 - (iii) a representative of an organization that advocates on behalf of veterans and military families;
 - (3) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, or the Secretary's designee;
 - (4) the Adjutant General, or the Adjutant General's designee;

(5) the chair of the Maryland Veterans Commission, or the chair's designee;

(6) the chair of the Maryland Veterans' Home Commission, or the chair's designee;

(7) the chair of the Maryland College Collaboration for Student Veterans Commission, or the chair's designee; and

(8) the following members, appointed by the Governor:

(i) a representative of an organization that advocates on behalf of woman veterans; ~~and~~

(ii) a representative of the reserve component of any branch of the armed forces of the United States, not including the National Guard;

(iii) an individual who is a military spouse or a representative of a military spouse advocacy group;

(iv) an individual with experience in health care, whether somatic health care or mental health care; and

(v) an individual with experience in workforce development.

(c) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, or the Secretary's designee, shall serve as chair of the Commission.

(d) The Department of Veterans Affairs shall provide staff for the Commission.

(e) A member of the Commission:

(1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Commission; but

(2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

(f) The Commission shall:

(1) study and make recommendations for developing and implementing a statewide strategic plan to make Maryland the best state for veterans and military families, including legislative and budgetary recommendations;

(2) while forming the recommendations and drafting the study required under item (1) of this subsection, consult with the Office of Military and Federal Affairs and the Maryland Military Installation Council in the Department of Commerce; and

~~(2)~~ (3) identify key performance indicators that can be compared to those of other states in order to assess the quality of life for veterans and military families in Maryland relative to other states.

(g) On or before December 1, 2024, the Commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June 1, 2024. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and 1 month and, at the end of June 30, 2025, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

Approved by the Governor, April 9, 2024.