

No. 10

(Senate Joint Resolution No. 16)

A Senate Joint Resolution concerning

Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect

FOR the purpose of requesting that the Governor establish a Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect to examine and report on the various problems associated with this issue; providing for the membership, appointment and staffing of the Task Force; providing that the Task Force report to the Governor and the General Assembly by a certain date; and generally relating to establishing a Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect; and providing for the termination of the Task Force on a certain date.

WHEREAS, Child abuse is a complex problem caused by many social, psychological and environmental conditions and these factors must be recognized in developing recommendations for the prevention, detection and treatment of child abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS, The problems associated with child abuse and neglect are not limited to any particular socio-economic group, and child abuse and neglect occurs among all strata of society; and

WHEREAS, The present economic recession and high unemployment have intensified family stress resulting in increased incidents of child abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS, Child abuse and neglect often causes permanent physical and mental damage, desensitizes the child to violence and creates the likelihood that the child will become an abuser or commit violent crimes; and

WHEREAS, The child who is subjected to abuse is more likely than other children to suffer from low self-esteem, to be an underachiever and to develop personality disorders; and

WHEREAS, The problem of physical violence against family members occurs in 1 out of 10 families in Maryland; and

WHEREAS, The number of reported cases of child abuse in Maryland has doubled from 2,597 cases in 1977 to 5,672 cases in 1981; and

WHEREAS, The number of reported cases of sexual abuse of children in Maryland has more than tripled from 294 cases in 1976 to 1,036 cases in 1981; and