

- (1) may not receive compensation; but
- (2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

(i) The Task Force shall study and make recommendations on veterans issues including:

(1) the efficacy of the services and benefits for veterans to determine how well the services and benefits help eligible individuals obtain benefits and whether these are being obtained in a timely manner;

(2) whether there are enough advocate offices to efficiently help all eligible individuals receive assistance;

(3) the potential impact of the increased number of veterans returning from military service in recent conflicts on services provided by the State;

(4) what services are provided to veterans, veterans' families and survivors and what services need to be provided including medical care, hospice care, and mental health services;

(5) the feasibility of establishing homes for veterans in the Crownsville Hospital Center and other regions of the State;

(6) the feasibility of establishing regional outreach and advocacy centers around the State and using existing service centers as outreach and advocacy centers;

(7) the identification of State and federal benefits and services and how to make them more comprehensive;

(8) how to improve outreach to women who are eligible to receive veteran-related benefits; and

(9) any issue regarding benefits and assistance to veterans that the Task Force determines is necessary.

(j) The Task Force shall submit an interim report to the Governor and the General Assembly, on or before December 1, 2006, and report its final findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly, on or before December 1, 2007.

SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 2 of this Act shall be construed to apply retroactively and shall be applied to a Maryland resident who was a member of the uniform services of the United States serving in the Afghanistan conflict on or after October 24, 2001, or the Iraq conflict on or after March 19, 2003.

SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June 1, 2006. Section 3 of this Act shall remain effective for a period of 1 year, 6 months and 1 day and, at the end of December 1, 2007, with no further action required by the General Assembly, Section 3 of this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.