

CHAPTER 504

(House Bill 971)

AN ACT concerning

Task Force to Study the ~~Abuses~~ Uses of Methylphenidate and Other Drugs on School Children

FOR the purpose of establishing a Task Force to Study the ~~Abuses~~ Uses of Methylphenidate and Other Drugs on School Children; providing for the membership, duties, staffing, and termination of the Task Force; requiring a certain report; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the establishment of a certain task force.

BY adding to

Article 41 – Governor – Executive and Administrative Departments

Section 18-313

Annotated Code of Maryland

(1993 Replacement Volume and 1996 Supplement)

Preamble

WHEREAS, There are between 1.5 million to 2.5 million children in the United States under age 18 who have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); and

~~WHEREAS, In recent years there has been a dramatic increase in the use of the drug methylphenidate to treat ADHD in school-age children, with the number of children taking this drug doubling in the last five years; and~~

~~WHEREAS, Methylphenidate, which has a high habit forming potential, may be an effective means of treatment for ADHD in some children by enabling hyperactive children to calm down and to focus more effectively on school tasks; and~~

~~WHEREAS, For other children use of the drug may be ineffective or produce serious side effects, such as insomnia, nervousness, loss of appetite, weight loss, and palpitations and hallucinations; and~~

~~WHEREAS, There is concern that ADHD is being over diagnosed and, consequently, that methylphenidate is being over prescribed for this condition among school age children; and~~

~~WHEREAS, There is also concern that methylphenidate may be underutilized among ADHD children whose condition requires that use of the drug should not be limited only to school settings; and~~

WHEREAS, There is a need to determine the prevalence and the effects of the use of methylphenidate among school-age children in Maryland; and