

Afghanistan or Iraq conflicts; requiring the provision of certain behavioral health services under certain circumstances in certain areas of the State to veterans of the Afghanistan or Iraq conflicts; requiring the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to seek certain reimbursement for certain services; requiring the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to separately account for certain funds; creating the Veterans Behavioral Health Advisory Board; providing for the composition and chair of the Board; providing for the staffing of the Board; prohibiting members of the Board from receiving compensation but entitling members to reimbursement of certain expenses; establishing the duties of the Board; requiring the Board to submit certain reports to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before certain dates; requiring the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, in consultation with the Board, to submit a certain application for certain funds on or before a certain date; requiring the Department to submit a copy of the application to the Maryland Congressional Delegation and certain committees of the General Assembly; providing for the termination of this Act; defining certain terms; and generally relating to the behavioral health needs of veterans and their families.

BY adding to

Article – Health – General

Section 13-2701 through 13-2703 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 27.
Behavioral Health Services for Maryland Veterans of the Afghanistan
and Iraq Conflicts”

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2005 Replacement Volume and 2007 Supplement)

Preamble

WHEREAS, Maryland has a long and proud history of commitment to military service, with over 460,000 veterans who have served the nation in the armed forces; and

WHEREAS, Maryland has over 10,000 veterans of the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, with 5,000 more projected to return by the end of 2008; and

WHEREAS, It is among the highest priorities of the State to ensure that veterans returning from active service have the support, opportunities, and services necessary to facilitate their smooth transition from military to civilian life, and to ease that transition for their families; and

WHEREAS, Among the obstacles returning veterans often face are unmet physical and behavioral health needs arising out of their service; and

WHEREAS, The psychological trauma of the war on terror, the counterinsurgency, and the urban battlefield has put veterans returning from