

1 AN ACT concerning government.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Department of Veterans' Affairs Act is
5 amended by adding Section 38 as follows:

6 (20 ILCS 2805/38 new)

7 Sec. 38. Veterans' Service-Related Ailments Task Force.

8 (a) The Veterans' Service-Related Ailments Task Force is
9 created. The Task Force shall review and make recommendations
10 regarding veterans' service-related ailments that are not
11 recognized by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs,
12 including exploring why certain service-related ailments are
13 not recognized and determining what may be done to have them
14 recognized.

15 Additionally, the Task Force shall assess ways the State of
16 Illinois can improve the rate at which disability compensation
17 claims are approved by the federal government and correct the
18 disparity between the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs'
19 approval of disability compensation for Illinois veterans and
20 that which is approved for veterans in other states.

21 (b) The Task Force shall have 15 members, comprised as
22 follows:

23 (1) The Director of Veterans' Affairs or the Director's

1 designee, who shall serve as chairperson.

2 (2) 2 Members from the House of Representatives,
3 appointed one each by the Speaker of the House and the
4 House Minority Leader.

5 (3) 2 Members of the Senate, appointed one each by the
6 President of the Senate and the Senate Minority Leader.

7 (4) One veteran, appointed by the Director of Veterans'
8 Affairs.

9 (5) One medical professional with experience working
10 with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, appointed by
11 the Director of Veterans' Affairs.

12 (6) 4 representatives from a variety of veterans
13 organizations representing geographic diversity in the
14 State, appointed by the Director of Veterans' Affairs.

15 (7) 4 members, one of whom shall be appointed by the
16 chair of the Veterans' Affairs Committee of the House of
17 Representatives, one of whom shall be appointed by the
18 minority spokesperson of the Veterans' Affairs Committee
19 of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be
20 appointed by the chair of the Veterans Affairs Committee of
21 the Senate, and one of whom shall be appointed by the
22 minority spokesperson of the Veterans Affairs Committee of
23 the Senate. Those appointed to the Task Force under this
24 paragraph shall be members of different Illinois counties'
25 Veterans Assistance Commissions, Veteran Service Officers,
26 and VITAS officials.

1 Task Force members shall serve without compensation but may
2 be reimbursed for their expenses incurred in performing their
3 duties.

4 (c) The Task Force shall meet at least once every 2 months
5 beginning July 1, 2019, and at other times as determined by the
6 Task Force.

7 (d) The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall provide
8 administrative and other support to the Task Force.

9 (e) The Task Force shall prepare a report that summarizes
10 its work and makes recommendations resulting from its study.
11 The Task Force shall submit the report of its findings and
12 recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by
13 December 31, 2020. The Task Force is dissolved, and this
14 Section is repealed, on December 31, 2021.

15 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
16 becoming law.