ASSEMBLY, No. 1057

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

212th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2006 SESSION

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman JEFF VAN DREW
District 1 (Cape May, Atlantic and Cumberland)
Assemblyman JACK CONNERS
District 7 (Burlington and Camden)

SYNOPSIS
Establishes "New Jersey Veterans' Hospital Task Force."

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/7/2006)
AN ACT establishing the "New Jersey Veterans' Hospital Task
Force."

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
of New Jersey:

1. There is established the "New Jersey Veterans' Hospital Task
Force." The purpose of the task force shall be to study and
evaluate, and develop recommendations relating to, the construction
and operation of a veterans' health care facility in southern New
Jersey.

2. a. The task force shall be comprised of 13 members as
follows:
   (1) the Adjutant General of the Department of Military and
Veterans Affairs and the Commissioner of Health and Senior
Services, or their designees, who shall serve ex officio;
   (2) two members of the Senate to be appointed by the President
of the Senate, who shall be members of different political parties;
and two members of the General Assembly to be appointed by the
Speaker of the General Assembly, who shall be members of
different political parties;
   (3) seven public members, to be appointed as follows:
      (a) two members appointed by the Governor, upon the
recommendation of the New Jersey Business and Industry
Association, who shall be veterans and active participants in the
business community in southern New Jersey; and
      (b) five members appointed by the Governor, who shall include a
veteran from each of the following counties: Atlantic, Cape May,
Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem.
   b. The legislative and public members of the task force shall be
appointed no later than the 60th day after the effective date of this
act. Vacancies in the membership of the task force shall be filled in
the same manner provided for the original appointments.
   c. The task force shall organize as soon as practicable following
the appointment of its members and shall elect a chairperson and
vice-chairperson from among the members of the task force. The
task force shall appoint a secretary who need not be a member of
the task force.
   d. The public members shall serve without compensation, but
shall be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the
performance of their duties and within the limits of funds available
to the task force.
   e. The task force shall be entitled to call to its assistance and
avail itself of the services of the employees of any State, county or
municipal department, board, bureau, commission or agency as it
may require and as may be available to it for its purposes.
   f. The task force may meet and hold hearings at the places it
designates during the sessions or recesses of the Legislature.

g. The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and the Department of Health and Senior Services shall provide staff support to the task force.

3. It shall be the duty of the task force to:
   a. estimate the capital, operational and administrative expenses associated with establishing a new veterans' health care facility in southern New Jersey, or contracting with an existing health care facility to provide medical services to veterans;
   b. obtain and review statistical data on the number of veterans residing in Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem counties and the number of veterans receiving medical services at hospitals within those counties in order to determine a central location for a veterans' health care facility;
   c. determine the size and staffing levels necessary for a veterans' health care facility to provide a full range of primary care and medical and surgical subspecialty care to eligible veterans;
   d. review various methods of financing a veterans' health care facility through public, private and public-private partnership financing systems; and
   e. investigate opportunities for the State to enter into collaborative agreements with the federal government to ensure the most efficient use of funds and resources related to the operation of a veterans' health care facility.

4. The task force shall report to the Governor and the Legislature, no later than 12 months after its initial meeting, on its findings and recommendations regarding strategies for the construction and operation of a veterans' health care facility in southern New Jersey.

5. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire upon the issuance of the task force report.

STATEMENT

This bill establishes the "New Jersey Veterans' Hospital Task Force.”

The bill provides as follows:
- The purpose of the task force is to study and evaluate, and make recommendations related to the construction and operation of a veterans' health care facility in southern New Jersey.
- The task force is to be comprised of 13 members as follows:
  (1) the Adjutant General of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services, or their designees, as ex officio members;
(2) two members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate, who are members of different political parties; and two members of the General Assembly appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, who are members of different political parties; (3) seven public members, to be appointed as follows:

-- two members appointed by the Governor, upon the recommendation of the New Jersey Business and Industry Association, who are veterans and active participants in the business community in southern New Jersey; and

-- five members appointed by the Governor, to include a veteran from each of the following counties: Atlantic, Cumberland, Cape May, Gloucester and Salem.

- The legislative and public members of the task force are to be appointed no later than the 60th day after the effective date of the bill.

- The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and the Department of Health and Senior Services are directed to provide staff support to the task force.

- It will be the duty of the task force to:
  -- estimate the capital, operational and administrative expenses associated with establishing a new veterans' health care facility in southern New Jersey, or contracting with an existing health care facility to provide medical services to veterans;
  -- obtain and review statistical data on the number of veterans residing in Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem counties and the number of veterans receiving medical services at hospitals within those counties in the past five years in order to determine a central location for a veterans' health care facility;
  -- review various methods of financing a veterans' health care facility through public, private and public-private partnership financing systems; and
  -- investigate opportunities for the State to enter into collaborative agreements with the federal government to ensure the most efficient use of funds and resources related to the operation of a veterans’ health care facility.

- The task force is directed to report to the Governor and the Legislature, no later than 12 months after its initial meeting, on its findings and recommendations.

- The bill expires upon the issuance of the task force report.