



103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2023 and 2024

HB5653

Introduced 2/9/2024, by Rep. Stephanie A. Kifowit

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

20 ILCS 2805/38

Amends the Department of Veterans' Affairs Act. Reenacts a provision concerning the Veterans' Service-Related Ailments Task Force repealed by Public Act 102-417. Changes the name of the Veterans' Service-Related Ailments Task Force to the Veterans' Services Task Force. Changes the frequency of Task Force meetings to at least twice a year and at any other times the Task Force deems necessary. Requires the Task Force to submit its report to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 31, 2025. Repeals the provisions creating the Task Force on December 31, 2026. Effective immediately.

LRB103 36227 KTG 66320 b

1 AN ACT concerning State 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 reenacting and changing Section 38 as follows:

6 (20 ILCS 2805/38)

7 (Section scheduled to be repealed on December 31, 2023)

8 Sec. 38. Veterans' Services ~~Service-Related Ailments~~ Task
9 Force.

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

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

1 (b) The Task Force shall have 15 members, comprised as
2 follows:

3 (1) The Director of Veterans' Affairs or the
4 Director's designee.

5 (2) 2 Members from the House of Representatives,
6 appointed one each by the Speaker of the House and the
7 House Minority Leader.

8 (3) 2 Members of the Senate, appointed one each by the
9 President of the Senate and the Senate Minority Leader.

10 (4) One veteran, appointed by the Director of
11 Veterans' Affairs.

12 (5) One medical professional with experience working
13 with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, appointed by
14 the Director of Veterans' Affairs.

15 (6) 4 representatives from a variety of veterans
16 organizations representing geographic diversity in the
17 State, appointed by the Director of Veterans' Affairs.

18 (7) 4 members, one of whom shall be appointed by the
19 chair of the Veterans' Affairs Committee of the House of
20 Representatives, one of whom shall be appointed by the
21 minority spokesperson of the Veterans' Affairs Committee
22 of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be
23 appointed by the chair of the Veterans Affairs Committee
24 of the Senate, and one of whom shall be appointed by the
25 minority spokesperson of the Veterans Affairs Committee of
26 the Senate. Those appointed to the Task Force under this

1 paragraph shall be members of different Illinois counties'
2 Veterans Assistance Commissions, Veteran Service Officers,
3 and VITAS officials.

4 Task Force members shall serve without compensation but
5 may be reimbursed for their expenses incurred in performing
6 their duties.

7 (c) The Task Force shall meet at least twice a year and at
8 any other times it deems necessary ~~once every 2 months~~
9 ~~beginning on or before July 1, 2021, and at other times as~~
10 ~~determined by the Task Force.~~ Task Force members shall select
11 from amongst themselves a chairperson or co-chairpersons at
12 the initial Task Force meeting.

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

15 (e) The Task Force shall prepare a report that summarizes
16 its work and makes recommendations resulting from its study.
17 The Task Force shall submit the report of its findings and
18 recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by
19 December 31, 2025 ~~2022~~. The Task Force is dissolved, and this
20 Section is repealed, on December 31, 2026 ~~2023~~.

21 (Source: P.A. 101-225, eff. 8-9-19; 102-417, eff. 8-20-21.)

22 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
23 becoming law.