



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 22**

February Session, 2024

Substitute House Bill No. 5159

*House of Representatives, March 13, 2024*

The Committee on Children reported through REP. LINEHAN of the 103rd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE RESPONSIVENESS OF STATE AGENCIES AND THE JUDICIAL BRANCH TO ISSUES CONCERNING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a task force  
2 to study the responsiveness of state agencies and the Judicial Branch to  
3 issues concerning child sexual abuse. The task force shall undertake an  
4 examination of state agency and Judicial Branch policies and practices  
5 relating to and impacting children in order to identify opportunities to  
6 detect, mitigate, prevent and effectively respond to such abuse. For the  
7 purposes of this section, "state agency" means the Departments of  
8 Children and Families, Public Health, Developmental Services, Social  
9 Services, Mental Health and Addiction Services, Emergency Services  
10 and Public Protection and Education.

11 (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

12 (1) One appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,  
13 who is an attorney admitted to the bar of this state with expertise in  
14 child welfare;

15 (2) One appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, who is  
16 a psychologist licensed pursuant to chapter 383 of the general statutes  
17 with expertise in the treatment of children who have suffered from child  
18 sexual abuse;

19 (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of  
20 Representatives, who is a clinical social worker licensed pursuant to  
21 chapter 383b of the general statutes with expertise in identifying child  
22 sexual abuse;

23 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, who is a  
24 physician licensed pursuant to chapter 370 of the general statutes with  
25 expertise in pediatric medicine;

26 (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of  
27 Representatives, who is a representative of a state-wide organization  
28 dedicated to the prevention of sexual violence;

29 (6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, who is a  
30 representative of a children's advocacy center, as defined in section 17a-  
31 106a of the general statutes;

32 (7) The Commissioner of Children and Families, or the  
33 commissioner's designee;

34 (8) The Commissioner of Public Health, or the commissioner's  
35 designee;

36 (9) The Commissioner of Developmental Services, or the  
37 commissioner's designee;

38 (10) The Commissioner of Social Services, or the commissioner's  
39 designee;

40 (11) The Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services, or  
41 the commissioner's designee;

42 (12) The Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection,  
43 or the commissioner's designee;

44 (13) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee;

45 (14) The Chief Court Administrator, or the administrator's designee;

46 (15) The Probate Court Administrator, or the administrator's  
47 designee;

48 (16) The Chief State's Attorney, or the Chief State's Attorney's  
49 designee;

50 (17) The Chief Public Defender, or the Chief Public Defender's  
51 designee;

52 (18) The Child Advocate, or the Child Advocate's designee;

53 (19) The executive director of the Commission on Women, Children,  
54 Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, or the executive director's designee;

55 (20) A member of the Trafficking in Persons Council, designated by  
56 the chairperson of the council;

57 (21) A member of the Governor's Task Force on Justice for Abused  
58 Children, established in accordance with the Child Abuse Prevention  
59 and Treatment Act, 42 USC 5106c et seq., jointly designated by the  
60 cochairpersons of the task force;

61 (22) A member of the joint standing committee of the General  
62 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children, jointly  
63 designated by the cochairpersons of the committee; and

64 (23) A member of the joint standing committee of the General  
65 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary, jointly  
66 designated by the cochairpersons of the committee.

67 (c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1),  
68 (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (22) or (23) of subsection (b) of this section may be a  
69 member of the General Assembly.

70 (d) All initial appointments to the task force shall be made not later

71 than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall  
72 be filled by the appointing authority.

73 (e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro  
74 tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force from  
75 among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule  
76 the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty  
77 days after the effective date of this section.

78 (f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the  
79 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children  
80 shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

81 (g) Not later than January 1, 2025, the task force shall submit a report  
82 on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committees  
83 of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to  
84 children and the judiciary, in accordance with the provisions of section  
85 11-4a of the general statutes. Such recommendations shall include, but  
86 need not be limited to, any legislative recommendations and  
87 recommendations for changes to the policies or procedures of any state  
88 agency or the Judicial Branch that would aid such agency or said branch  
89 in the detection, mitigation, prevention and effective response to child  
90 sexual abuse. The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits  
91 such report or January 1, 2025, whichever is later.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section

**Statement of Legislative Commissioners:**

In Subsec. (a) "and the Judicial Branch" was inserted after "state agencies" for consistency, in Subsec. (b)(21) "pursuant to" was changed to "in accordance with" for accuracy, and in Subsec. (c), ", (22) or (23)" was added for accuracy.

**KID**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

*The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.*

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**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:** None

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

The bill, which establishes a task force to study the responsiveness of state agencies and the Judicial branch to issues concerning child sexual abuse, results in no fiscal impact because the task force has the expertise necessary to meet the requirements of the bill.

**The Out Years**

**State Impact:** None

**Municipal Impact:** None



**OLR Bill Analysis**

**sHB 5159**

***AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE RESPONSIVENESS OF STATE AGENCIES AND THE JUDICIAL BRANCH TO ISSUES CONCERNING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE.***

**SUMMARY**

The Office of Legislative Research does not analyze Special Acts.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 17 Nay 0 (02/29/2024)