



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 327

February Session, 2024



AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE EFFECTS OF HATE SPEECH AND BULLYING ON CHILDREN.

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 effects and social impact of hate speech and bullying on
3 children. Such study shall include, but need not be limited to, (1) an
4 analysis of the effects of hate speech and bullying on the mental and
5 physical health and academic achievement of children, (2) an analysis of
6 the settings and environments in which children are most likely to
7 encounter and participate in hate speech or bullying, including whether
8 such hate speech or bullying occurs in person or through Internet-based
9 applications or forums, (3) an examination of whether children
10 encounter hate speech or bullying that is perpetrated by children or
11 adults, or both, in each such setting or environment, (4) an analysis of
12 the factors that may contribute to a child's likelihood of encountering
13 hate speech or bullying, and a child or adult's likelihood of perpetrating
14 hate speech or bullying, and (5) recommendations for strategies to
15 prevent, reduce and address the effects of hate speech and bullying in
16 communities and schools in the state, including, but not limited to, the
17 implementation of (A) school, community-based and state-wide
18 programs (i) for the prevention and reduction of hate speech and
19 bullying, and (ii) to reduce the effects on children of hate speech and

20 bullying, (B) public media campaigns, and (C) statutory changes
21 concerning the prevention and reduction of and response to hate speech
22 and bullying in schools. For the purposes of this section, "hate speech"
23 means any form of expression through which a child or adult intends to
24 vilify, humiliate or incite hatred against a child on the basis of such
25 child's race, religion, skin color, sex, gender identity, ethnicity,
26 disability, body weight or body type or national origin, and "bullying"
27 means unwanted and aggressive behavior among children that involves
28 a real or perceived power imbalance.

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

30 (1) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,
31 one of whom shall be a representative of an organization that works to
32 improve the behavioral health and well-being of children and one of
33 whom shall be a representative of an organization that advocates for
34 special education equity for children;

35 (2) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of
36 whom shall be a representative of a state chapter of a national
37 association of providers of pediatric care and one of whom shall be a
38 representative of a state-wide association of school-based health centers;

39 (3) Two appointed by the majority leader of the House of
40 Representatives, one of whom shall be a representative of a state-wide
41 association of boards of education and one of whom shall be a
42 representative of an organization that works to eliminate discrimination
43 based on race;

44 (4) Two appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, one of whom
45 shall be a representative of a state-wide association of public school
46 superintendents and one of whom shall be a representative of an
47 organization that works to eliminate discrimination based on religion;

48 (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of
49 Representatives, who shall be a representative of an organization that
50 works to eliminate discrimination based on sexual and gender identity;

51 (6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, who shall be
52 a representative of an organization that works to eliminate
53 discrimination based on disability status;

54 (7) The Commissioner of Public Health, or the commissioner's
55 designee;

56 (8) The Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services, or
57 the commissioner's designee;

58 (9) The Commissioner of Children and Families, or the
59 commissioner's designee;

60 (10) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee;

61 (11) The Chief State's Attorney, or the Chief State's Attorney's
62 designee;

63 (12) The executive director of the Commission on Human Rights and
64 Opportunities, or the executive director's designee; and

65 (13) The executive director of the Commission on Women, Children,
66 Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, or the executive director's designee.

67 (c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1),
68 (2), (3), (4), (5) or (6) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member
69 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 committee of
83 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children,
84 in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.
85 The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or
86 January 1, 2025, whichever is later.

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

In Subsec. (a)(2), ", online" was deleted to eliminate redundant language and "and forums" was changed to "or forums" for clarity.

KID *Joint Favorable Subst.*