

1 HJR151
2 199761-2
3 By Representatives Rafferty, McCampbell, Alexander, Hollis,
4 Lawrence, Chestnut, Warren, Drummond, Isbell, Clarke, Lee,
5 Sorrells, Daniels, Fincher, Marques, Allen, Dismukes, Forte,
6 Scott, Rowe, South, Weaver, Sullivan, Treadaway, Ellis, Fridy,
7 Oliver and Hall
8 RFD: Rules
9 First Read: 23-APR-19

1
2 ENROLLED, House Joint Resolution,
3 ESTABLISHING THE TASK FORCE ON VETERANS' SUICIDE.
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5 WHEREAS, the Alabama Legislature is concerned with
6 the health, safety, and welfare of all returning veterans of
7 this country's armed forces to Alabama; and

8 WHEREAS, the rate of mental health problems and
9 suicides for members of this country's armed forces remains
10 starttlingly high; and

11 WHEREAS, In 2016, the veteran suicide rate in
12 Alabama was 60 percent higher than the rate for civilians and
13 9 percent higher than other southern states; and

14 WHEREAS, 16.6 percent of all suicide deaths in
15 Alabama are veterans; now therefore,

16 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
17 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That there is created the Task
18 Force on Veterans' Suicide to investigate the causes of and
19 prevention of suicides among returning Alabama veterans of the
20 United States Military and to make recommendations to the
21 Legislature to address this important issue.

22 (a) The task force shall consist of nine members as
23 follows:

24 (1) One veteran appointed by the Commissioner of
25 Veterans' Affairs, and this member shall act as chair.

1 (2) One member appointed by the Speaker of the House
2 of Representatives.

3 (3) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of
4 the House of Representatives.

5 (4) One member appointed by the President of the
6 Senate.

7 (5) One member appointed by the Senate Minority
8 Leader.

9 (6) One veteran appointed by the Commissioner of the
10 Department of Mental Health.

11 (7) One representative from the Department of Public
12 Health, appointed by the State Health Officer.

13 (8) One representative of the Department of Human
14 Resources, appointed by the Commissioner of the Department of
15 Human Resources.

16 (9) One veteran appointed by the Governor.

17 (b) All appointing authorities shall coordinate
18 their appointments so that diversity of gender, race, and
19 geographical areas is reflective of the makeup of this state.
20 To the extent practicable, the appointing authorities shall
21 endeavour to appoint a veteran.

22 (c) The members of the task force shall serve with
23 no compensation other than per diem or travel reimbursement to
24 be paid by the appointing authority according to the
25 constitution, state law, or existing policies or rules.

1 (d) The first meeting of the task force shall be
2 called by the chair to organize and prioritize the actions of
3 the task force. Subsequent meetings may be called by the chair
4 or a majority of the membership of the task force.

5 (d) The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall
6 provide administrative and other support to the task force.

7 (e) (1) Within 60 days of the first meeting of the
8 task force, the task force shall meet with representatives of
9 AlaVetNet to coordinate the dissemination of information
10 gathered by AlaVetNet related to this issue and to consult
11 with AlaVetNet regarding associated issues related to veteran
12 suicide.

13 (2) The task force shall also coordinate and
14 communicate with relevant nonprofit groups and student veteran
15 organizations and groups of public two-year and four-year
16 colleges and universities regarding issues associated with
17 veteran suicide.

18 (f) The task force shall hold, at a minimum, one
19 town hall meeting to discuss issues related to veteran suicide
20 in all municipalities in the state whose population exceeds
21 70,000 according to the latest federal decennial census.

22 (g) A progress report, including any preliminary
23 recommendations, shall be submitted by the task force
24 quarterly to the Legislature.

1 (h) The Alabama Task Force on Veterans' Suicide
2 shall present a report of its findings, which shall include
3 its recommendations for legislation, if any, to the
4 Legislature on or before two years from the enactment of this
5 resolution.

6 (i) The task force shall be dissolved after the
7 submission of its report to the Legislature.

