

Chapter 429

(House Bill 838)

AN ACT concerning

Task Force to Study Vocational and Technical Education Programs in Harford County

FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force to Study Vocational and Technical Education Programs in Harford County; providing for the composition, chair, and staffing of the Task Force; prohibiting a member of the Task Force from receiving certain compensation, but authorizing the reimbursement of certain expenses; requiring the Task Force, in consultation with a certain committee, to study and make recommendations regarding certain matters; requiring the Task Force to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor, the Harford County Executive, the Harford County Board of Education, and the General Assembly on or before a certain date; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the Task Force to Study Vocational and Technical Education Programs in Harford County.

Preamble

WHEREAS, The Harford Technical High School, which has served since 1978 as the “Home of Academic & Technical Excellence”, has a mission to ensure that every student will become a productive, responsible citizen while achieving mastery of academic, technical, and life skills; and

WHEREAS, The Harford Technical High School offers a rigorous menu of academic course work along with 18 State–approved Career and Technology Programs; and

WHEREAS, The Harford Technical High School offers work–based learning opportunities to eligible juniors and seniors, in their respective areas of career and technical study, which allows students to earn an income while earning credits toward graduation and gaining valuable career experience and industry contacts; and

WHEREAS, Annually, the number of applications the Harford Technical High School receives consistently exceeds the capacity of the school, resulting in numerous qualified applicants not being accepted for admission each year; and

WHEREAS, Efforts have been made to duplicate vocational and technical education programs in other high schools in Harford County; and

WHEREAS, Even with the success of Harford Technical High School and the duplication of some vocational and technical programs in other high schools, it is likely that a great need for additional vocational and technical education programs still exists because of the great demand for skilled workers in numerous industries and trades in Harford County; and

WHEREAS, Harford County Public Schools has recently formed a committee to review the program offerings at Harford Technical High School; however, there is a need for a broad-based forum, with participation from many stakeholders, to examine the vocational and technical education programs offered in Harford County, explore options to expand the capacity of the programs, and ensure that the programs remain current with the demands of the economy and relevant to current and potential future employers; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That:

(a) There is a Task Force to Study Vocational and Technical Education Programs in Harford County.

(b) The Task Force consists of the following members:

~~(1) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;~~

~~(2) one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;~~

~~(3)~~ (1) the Superintendent of Schools of Harford County, or the Superintendent's designee;

~~(4)~~ (2) the President of the Harford County Board of Education, or the President's designee;

~~(5)~~ (3) the County Executive of Harford County, or the County Executive's designee;

~~(6)~~ (4) the President of the Harford County Council, or the President's designee;

~~(7)~~ (5) the President of Harford Community College, or the President's designee;

~~(8)~~ (6) a representative from one of the four magnet programs in Harford County, appointed by the Superintendent of Schools of Harford County;

~~(9)~~ (7) one staff member of the Maryland State Department of Education, appointed by the State Superintendent of Schools;

~~(10)~~ (8) the President of the Harford County Education Association, or the President's designee;

~~(11)~~ (9) the President of the Harford County Chamber of Commerce, or the President's designee;

~~(12)~~ (10) the President of the Route 40 Business Association, or the President's designee;

~~(13)~~ (11) the President of the Board of Directors of the Army Alliance, or the President's designee; and

~~(14)~~ (12) the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Northeast Maryland Technology Council, or the Chair's designee.

(c) The members of the Task Force shall designate the chair from among the members of the Task Force.

(d) The Harford County Board of Education shall provide staff for the Task Force.

(e) A member of the Task Force:

(1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Task Force; but

(2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

(f) The Task Force, in consultation with the Harford County Public Schools committee charged with reviewing the program offerings at Harford Technical High School, shall:

(1) examine the current capacity of vocational and technical education programs at Harford Technical High School and programs at other high schools in Harford County;

(2) evaluate how much additional capacity is necessary in vocational and technical education programs in Harford County;

(3) explore potential options to address the need for additional capacity in vocational and technical education programs in Harford County, including an option to establish a second vocational and technical high school in the county;

(4) study the vocational and technical education programs at other vocational and technical high schools in the State;

(5) evaluate whether the vocational and technical education programs offered in Harford County are current with the demands of the economy and relevant to current and potential future employers;

(6) examine the transportation needs of students in vocational and technical education programs; and

(7) make recommendations regarding:

(i) the additional capacity that is necessary in vocational and technical education programs in Harford County;

(ii) options to address the additional capacity needs; and

(iii) the appropriate vocational and technical education programs necessary to remain current with the demands of the economy and relevant to current and potential future employers.

(g) On or before December 1, 2014, the Task Force shall report its findings and recommendations to the Governor, the Harford County Executive, the Harford County Council, the Harford County Board of Education, and, in accordance with § 2–1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2014. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of June 30, 2015, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

Approved by the Governor, May 5, 2014.