

1 HJR28
2 209550-1
3 By Representatives Rafferty and Oliver
4 RFD: Rules
5 First Read: 04-FEB-21

8 EXTENDING THE ALABAMA TASK FORCE ON VETERANS'
9 SUICIDE AND ALIGNING ITS EFFORTS WITH THE ALABAMA GOVERNOR'S
10 CHALLENGE TO PREVENT SUICIDE AMONG SERVICE MEMBERS, VETERANS,
11 AND THEIR FAMILIES.

12
13 WHEREAS, the Alabama Task Force on Veterans' Suicide
14 was created by the Legislature during the 2019 Regular Session
15 (Act 2019-144), to investigate causes of and prevention of
16 suicides among returning Alabama veterans of the United States
17 Military, and to make recommendations to the Legislature to
18 address this important issue; and

19 WHEREAS, in 2020, Alabama was invited to participate
20 in the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among Service
21 Members, Veterans, and Their Families, a program sponsored by
22 the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and the
23 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration;
24 this initiative and the Alabama Task Force on Veterans'
25 Suicide share the same intent, process, leadership, and team
26 composition and are highly complementary of one another; and

1 WHEREAS, the Alabama Task Force on Veterans' Suicide
2 submitted a report to the Legislature on October 6, 2020, and
3 concluded that the COVID-19 pandemic has unequivocally impeded
4 its efforts to accomplish the goals of the task force, thus
5 necessitating an extension of the task force; the report also
6 requested alignment of the efforts of the task force to that
7 of the Governor's Challenge to the extent possible, including
8 leadership alignment and integration of team members of each;
9 now therefore,

10 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
11 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the Alabama Task Force On
12 Veterans' Suicide, created in Act 2019-144 is extended through
13 the last legislative day of the 2022 Regular Session to
14 continue its investigation of the causes of and prevention of
15 suicides among returning Alabama veterans of the United States
16 Military and to make recommendations to the Legislature to
17 address this important issue.

18 (a) (1) The task force shall align its efforts, as
19 described in Act 2019-144, and collaborate with the chair and
20 members of the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among
21 Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families to formulate
22 recommendations relating to the development and implementation
23 of statewide suicide prevention best practices, using a public
24 health approach, including the development of recommendations
25 related to all of the following:

26 a. Identifying areas of need and screening veterans.

b. Promoting connections and improving care transitions among target veterans.

c. Educating providers and others regarding lethal means safety and safety planning.

(2) Members of the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families may participate in activities, meetings, and outreach efforts of the task force.

(3) The task force shall coordinate its community outreach efforts with the Governor's Challenge, including in-person or virtual "town hall" meetings in various locations throughout the state.

(b) The Alabama Task Force on Veterans' Suicide, in collaboration with the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families, shall present a report of its findings, which shall include its recommendations for legislation, if any, to the Legislature on or before the final legislative day of the 2022 Regular Session, at which time it shall stand dissolved.