

HB 571 – AS INTRODUCED

2013 SESSION

13-0209
09/04

HOUSE BILL **571**

AN ACT establishing a task force to study and make recommendations on the judicial branch family court division.

SPONSORS: Rep. Schlachman, Rock 18; Rep. Lambert, Hills 44; Rep. Lovejoy, Rock 36; Rep. DeSimone, Rock 14; Rep. Benn, Graf 12; Rep. Emerson, Ches 11; Rep. Itse, Rock 10; Sen. Stiles, Dist 24; Sen. Pierce, Dist 5

COMMITTEE: Children and Family Law

ANALYSIS

This bill establishes a task force to study and make recommendations on the judicial branch family court division.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struck through~~]
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Thirteen

AN ACT establishing a task force to study and make recommendations on the judicial branch family court division.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 New Section; Task Force on the Judicial Branch Family Court Division. Amend RSA 490-D by
2 inserting after section 15 the following new section:

3 490-D:16 Task Force on the Judicial Branch Family Court Division.

4 I. There is established the task force on the judicial branch family court division consisting
5 of 21 members. The governor shall appoint the members in subparagraphs (a) through (l) who shall
6 serve at the pleasure of the governor and shall include persons familiar with family law and
7 mediation. All persons who desire to serve as governor-appointed members shall submit a letter of
8 interest to be considered for appointment by the governor. The members of the task force shall be as
9 follows:

10 (a) Two Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) guardians ad litem.

11 (b) Two guardian ad litem board certified guardians ad litem.

12 (c) A sitting judge of the superior court.

13 (d) A sitting judge of the judicial branch family court division.

14 (e) Two attorneys practicing family law.

15 (f) An attorney employed by the department of health and human services, division of
16 children, youth, and families.

17 (g) A representative of the department of health and human services, division of child
18 support and child support enforcement.

19 (h) A child psychologist.

20 (i) An adult psychologist.

21 (j) Two retired marital masters.

22 (k) One male and one female member of the public who are experienced consumers of the
23 judicial branch family court division or mediation.

24 (l) A mediator-attorney with the New Hampshire Conflict Resolution Association
25 (NHCRA).

26 (m) Two members of the house of representatives, one of whom shall be a member of the
27 children and family law committee and one of whom shall be a member of the judiciary committee,
28 appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives.

29 (n) One senate member, appointed by the senate president.

30 (o) The executive director of the judicial council, or designee.

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1 II. The governor shall appoint one member to serve as the chairperson. The chairperson
2 shall call the first meeting of the task force within 45 days of the effective date of this section. The
3 task force shall meet at least monthly at a date, time, and place designated by the chairperson. Nine
4 persons shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Legislative members of the task
5 force shall receive mileage at the legislative rate when attending to the duties of the task force.

6 III. A member who is absent for 3 consecutive meetings may be removed from the task force.
7 The governor shall immediately fill all vacancies of non-legislative members. The speaker of the
8 house of representatives or the senate president shall immediately fill all vacancies of legislative
9 members.

10 IV. The task force on the judicial branch family court division is charged with developing a
11 proposal for improving the functioning of this division to benefit families and to reduce costs for the
12 state and for the families. In accomplishing this goal, the task force shall:

13 (a) Gather information on and study the current state of the judicial branch family court
14 division, including current procedures, timelines, and filing and reporting requirements.

15 (b) Develop a comprehensive plan, including, but not limited to:

16 (1) Recommendations for modifying the judicial branch family court division.

17 (2) Recommendations for modifying court rules as they apply to the judicial branch
18 family court division.

19 (3) Recommendations to increase efficiencies of case processing, reporting, and
20 information exchanges.

21 V. The task force shall report its findings and any recommendations for proposed legislation
22 to the senate president, the speaker of the house of representatives, the senate clerk, the house clerk,
23 and the governor on or before November 1, 2014.

24 2 Repeal. RSA 490-D:16, relative to the task force to study and make recommendations on the
25 judicial branch family court division, is repealed.

26 3 Effective Date.

27 I. Section 2 of this act shall take effect November 1, 2014.

28 II. The remainder of this act shall take effect upon its passage.