

1 S.112

2 Introduced by Committee on Judiciary

3 Date:

4 Subject: Family law; spousal support

5 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to create the  
6 Spousal Support and Maintenance Task Force.

7 An act relating to creating the Spousal Support and Maintenance Task Force

8 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

9 Sec. 1. SPOUSAL SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE TASK FORCE

10 (a) Creation. There is created the Spousal Support and Maintenance Task  
11 Force for the purpose of reviewing and making legislative recommendations to  
12 Vermont's law concerning spousal support and maintenance.

13 (b) Membership. The Task Force shall be composed of the following seven  
14 members:

15 (1) a current member of the House of Representatives appointed by the  
16 Speaker of the House;

17 (2) a current member of the Senate appointed by the Committee on  
18 Committees;

19 (3) a Superior Court judge who has significant experience in the Family  
20 Division of Superior Court appointed by the Chief Justice;

1           (4) the Chief Superior Judge;

2           (5) two experienced family law attorneys appointed by the Family Law  
3           Section of the Vermont Bar Association; and

4           (6) a representative of Vermont Alimony Reform who is a resident of  
5           Vermont.

6           (c) Powers and duties. The Task Force shall make legislative  
7           recommendations to Vermont's spousal support and maintenance laws aimed  
8           to improve clarity, fairness, predictability, and consistency across the State in  
9           recognition of changes to the family structure in recent decades. The Task  
10          Force may hold public hearings and shall consider:

11           (1) perspectives from stakeholders and interested parties;

12           (2) the Alimony Reform Report of January 13, 2017 submitted to the  
13          House and Senate Committees on Judiciary by the Chief Superior Judge  
14          pursuant to 2016 Acts and Resolves No. 167, Sec. 8a; and

15           (3) the Massachusetts Alimony Reform Act of 2011 and any report  
16          providing analysis on distinctions between Vermont law and practice and  
17          Massachusetts law and practice.

18           (d) Assistance. The Task Force shall have the administrative, technical,  
19          and legal assistance of the Office of Legislative Council.

1       (e) Recommendation. On or before January 15, 2018, the Task Force shall  
2       submit its recommendations for any legislative action to the Senate and House  
3       Committees on Judiciary.

4       (f) Meetings.

5           (1) The Superior Court judge appointed in accordance with subdivision  
6       (b)(3) of this section shall serve as chair.

7           (2) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

8           (3) The Task Force shall cease to exist on March 1, 2018.

9       (g) Reimbursement.

10           (1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General  
11       Assembly, legislative members of the Task Force shall be entitled to per diem  
12       compensation and reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 406 for  
13       no more than four regular meetings and two public hearings. No meeting shall  
14       be held on the same day as a public hearing, and the Task Force shall endeavor  
15       to hold the public hearings in geographically diverse parts of the State.

16           (2) Other members of the Task Force who are not employees of the State  
17       of Vermont and who are not otherwise compensated or reimbursed for their  
18       attendance shall be entitled to per diem compensation and reimbursement of  
19       expenses pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 1010 for no more than four regular meetings  
20       and two public hearings.

- 1      Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE
- 2      This act shall take effect on passage.