Sixty-sixth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota
In Regular Session Commencing Thursday, January 3, 2019

HOUSE BILL NO. 1237
(Representatives Roers Jones, Satrom, Schneider)
(Senator Clemens)

A BILL to provide for a task force on prevention of sexual abuse of children; and to provide for a report to the legislative management and the governor.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

SECTION 1. TASK FORCE ON PREVENTION OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN - REPORT TO THE LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT AND THE GOVERNOR.

1. Beginning with the effective date of this Act and ending September 30, 2024, the task force on the prevention of sexual abuse of children is established to develop and implement a comprehensive statewide approach to the prevention of child sexual abuse. The statewide approach must ensure appropriate policies, funding, staffing, resources, and programming are available. The task force shall build upon the efforts of the 2017-18 North Dakota task force on the prevention of sexual abuse of children.

2. The task force consists of the following members:

   a. One member of the senate appointed by the majority leader of the senate, one member of the house of representatives appointed by the majority leader of the house of representatives, and one member of the minority party appointed by the minority leaders of the senate and the house of representatives;

   b. The executive director of the department of human services, or the executive director's designee;

   c. A representative of a children's advocacy center or similar organization that assists in the investigation, prosecution, and treatment of child sexual and physical abuse cases, appointed by the executive director of the department of human services;

   d. A representative of a domestic violence rape crisis center involved in the prevention of child abuse or the treatment of child abuse victims, or both, appointed by the executive director of the department of human services;

   e. The superintendent of public instruction, or the superintendent's designee;

   f. A representative of law enforcement, appointed by the attorney general;

   g. The executive director of the Indian affairs commission, or the executive director's designee;

   h. One school social worker from a public school district in the state, appointed by the superintendent of public instruction;

   i. Two school principals, one from an urban school district and one from a rural school district in the state, appointed by the superintendent of public instruction from a list provided by the North Dakota council of educational leaders;

   j. One member from the faith-based community, appointed by the attorney general;

k. Two school counselors, one from an urban school district and one from a rural school district in the state, appointed by the superintendent of public instruction from a list provided by the North Dakota school counselors association; and

l. Any other organization or individual the task force deems appropriate.

3. The executive director of the department of human services, or the executive director's designee, shall convene the task force. The task force shall elect a presiding officer by a majority vote of the membership of the task force. The task force shall meet at the call of the presiding officer.

4. The task force shall focus on:

   a. Increasing child sexual abuse prevention education for tribal and nontribal children and adults;

   b. Increasing interagency data collection, sharing, and collective analysis;

   c. Supporting resource development for investigations and prosecutions of child sexual abuse, including the sentencing, supervision, and treatment of sex offenders;

   d. Increasing trauma-informed services for children, adult survivors, and families; and

   e. Implementing the remaining recommendations of the November 2018 final report of the North Dakota task force on the prevention of child sexual abuse.

5. The recommendations of the task force may include proposals for specific statutory changes, actions the task force deems necessary and appropriate to initiate awareness education of adults and children, and methods to foster cooperation among state agencies and between the state and local governments in adopting and implementing a policy addressing sexual abuse of children which may include:

   a. Developmentally appropriate resources for students in prekindergarten through grade twelve;

   b. Training for school personnel on child sexual abuse;

   c. Educational information to parents or guardians provided in school handbooks regarding the warning signs of a child being abused, along with any needed assistance, referral, or resource information;

   d. Available counseling and resources for students affected by sexual abuse;

   e. Emotional and educational support for a child of abuse to continue to be successful in school; and

   f. Any other action deemed appropriate.

6. Before July first of each even-numbered year, the task force shall submit a report, together with any findings and recommendations, to the legislative management and the governor. Before July 1, 2024, the task force shall submit a final report, together with any findings and recommendations, to the legislative management and the governor.

Speaker of the House

President of the Senate

Chief Clerk of the House

Secretary of the Senate

This certifies that the within bill originated in the House of Representatives of the Sixty-sixth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota and is known on the records of that body as House Bill No. 1237.

House Vote:	Yeas 87	Nays 2	Absent 5
Senate Vote:	Yeas 47	Nays 0	Absent 0

Chief Clerk of the House

Received by the Governor at 9:48 AM. on April 17, 2019.

Approved at 7:29 PM. on April 17, 2019.

Governor

Filed in this office this 18th day of April, 2019,

at 10:38 o'clock A. M.

Secretary of State