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State of Minnesota
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
First Division Engrossment

NINETY-FIRST SESSION

H. F. No. 1744

02/27/2019 Authored by Masin, Scott and Gruenhagen
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

Division Action

03/07/2019 *Referred by Chair to the Jobs and Economic Development Finance Division*
Division action, return to the Committee on Ways and Means
Referred by Chair to the Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Division
03/20/2019 *Division action, to adopt as amended and return to the Committee on Ways and Means*
03/21/2019 *Referred by Chair to the Jobs and Economic Development Finance Division*

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to family law; establishing the Family Law Mediation Task Force; requiring
1.3 a report.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. **FAMILY LAW MEDIATION TASK FORCE.**

1.6 Subdivision 1. **Establishment.** The Family Law Mediation Task Force is established
1.7 (1) to advise and inform the legislature on the impact of conflict on children during the
1.8 marital dissolution process and the process to establish paternity and (2) to make conflict
1.9 resolution recommendations to reduce that conflict.

1.10 Subd. 2. **Membership.** (a) The task force consists of 16 members as follows:

1.11 (1) two members of the house of representatives, one appointed by the speaker of the
1.12 house and one appointed by the minority leader;

1.13 (2) two members of the senate, one appointed by the majority leader and one appointed
1.14 by the minority leader;

1.15 (3) one representative from the Family Law Section of the Minnesota State Bar
1.16 Association;

1.17 (4) one representative from the Alternative Dispute Resolution Section of the Minnesota
1.18 State Bar Association;

1.19 (5) one representative from the Academy of Professional Family Mediators;

1.20 (6) one representative from the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts, Minnesota
1.21 Chapter;

- 2.1 (7) one representative from Conflict Resolution Minnesota;
- 2.2 (8) one representative from the Minnesota Psychological Association;
- 2.3 (9) one representative from the Minnesota Association of Marriage and Family Therapists;
- 2.4 (10) one representative from the Professional Mediation Board of Standards;
- 2.5 (11) one family court referee, one district court judge, or one retired judge with experience
- 2.6 in family law matters, appointed by the chief justice of the supreme court;
- 2.7 (12) one representative from the Minnesota Legal Services Coalition; and
- 2.8 (13) two members of the public with experience in mediation, appointed by the president
- 2.9 of the Academy of Professional Family Mediators.
- 2.10 (b) Members shall serve without compensation. Unless otherwise specified, the highest
- 2.11 ranking person or, if none, the governing body of each organization listed in paragraph (a)
- 2.12 is responsible for appointing its representative.
- 2.13 (c) Appointments must be made by July 1, 2019.
- 2.14 Subd. 3. **Organization.** (a) The commissioner of mediation services or the commissioner's
- 2.15 designee shall convene the first meeting of the task force by August 1, 2019.
- 2.16 (b) The task force shall meet monthly or as determined by the chair.
- 2.17 (c) The members of the task force shall elect a chair and other officers as the members
- 2.18 deem necessary.
- 2.19 Subd. 4. **Staff.** The commissioner of mediation services shall provide support staff,
- 2.20 office space, and administrative services for the task force.
- 2.21 Subd. 5. **Duties.** (a) The task force shall develop a family law mediation report covering
- 2.22 the following:
- 2.23 (1) an analysis of the existing research regarding the effect of the dissolution process
- 2.24 on children;
- 2.25 (2) recommendations for conflict resolution practices as an alternative to the court process
- 2.26 to reduce the negative impact dissolution proceedings have on children; and
- 2.27 (3) recommendations for a model program for mediation services for implementation
- 2.28 in district courts throughout the state.
- 2.29 (b) The task force shall engage with each district court in the state to encourage the use
- 2.30 of the model program for mediation services recommended under paragraph (a).

3.1 Subd. 6. **Report.** The task force must submit the report required under subdivision 5 to
3.2 the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction
3.3 over family law by January 31, 2020. The report must include the analysis and
3.4 recommendations required under subdivision 5 and any draft legislation necessary to
3.5 implement the recommendations.

3.6 Subd. 7. **Open meetings.** Except as otherwise provided in this section, the task force is
3.7 subject to Minnesota Statutes, chapter 13D. A meeting of the task force occurs when a
3.8 quorum is present and the members receive information, discuss, or take action on any
3.9 matter relating to the duties of the task force. The task force may conduct meetings as
3.10 provided in Minnesota Statutes, section 13D.015 or 13D.02. The task force may conduct
3.11 meetings at any location in the state that is appropriate for the purposes of the task force as
3.12 long as the location is open and accessible to the public. For legislative members of the task
3.13 force, enforcement of this subdivision is governed by Minnesota Statutes, section 3.055,
3.14 subdivision 2. For nonlegislative members of the task force, enforcement of this subdivision
3.15 is governed by Minnesota Statutes, section 13D.06, subdivisions 1 and 2.

3.16 Subd. 8. **Expiration.** The task force expires upon submission of the report required
3.17 under subdivision 6.

3.18 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.