

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2023**

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**SENATE BILL 455**

Short Title: Protect Moms Who Serve. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Applewhite and Smith (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

April 3, 2023

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT DIRECTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, IN  
3 CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS  
4 AFFAIRS, TO STUDY HEALTH ISSUES AFFECTING WOMEN WHO SERVE IN THE  
5 MILITARY.

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 **SECTION 1.(a)** The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) shall study  
8 the following issues affecting women who serve in the military:

- 9 (1) Coordinating effectively between veterans health care facilities and  
10 non-veterans health care facilities in the delivery of maternity care and other  
11 health care services.  
12 (2) Facilitating access to community resources to address social determinants of  
13 health, including housing, nutrition, and employment status.  
14 (3) Identifying mental and behavioral health risk factors in the prenatal and  
15 postpartum periods and ensuring that pregnant and postpartum veterans get  
16 the treatments they need.  
17 (4) Facilitating access to childbirth preparation classes, parenting classes,  
18 nutrition counseling, breastfeeding support, lactation classes, and breast  
19 pumps.  
20 (5) Reducing maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity, with a particular  
21 focus on racial and ethnic disparities in maternal health outcomes.

22 **SECTION 1.(b)** In conducting the study required by subsection (a) of this section,  
23 the Department of Health and Human Services shall solicit feedback from mothers who are  
24 currently serving, or who formerly served, in the military. In addition, the DHHS shall consult  
25 with the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA), as necessary. The DMVA shall  
26 cooperate with the DHHS and provide any assistance or information requested with respect to  
27 the study required by subsection (a) of this section.

28 **SECTION 1.(c)** By April 1, 2024, the DHHS shall report its findings, and any  
29 recommendations for legislation, to the Senate Health Care Committee, the Joint Legislative  
30 Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services, the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee  
31 on General Government, and the Fiscal Research Division.

32 **SECTION 2.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of  
33 Health and Human Services the sum of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) in nonrecurring  
34 funds for the 2023-2024 fiscal year for the purpose of conducting the study described in Section  
35 1 of this act.

36 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2023.

