

SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR
CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 380

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 3, 2022

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 380.

This bill establishes the Disparity in Treatment of Persons with Disabilities in Underrepresented Communities Commission in, but not of, the Department of Community Affairs. The commission will be tasked with studying issues relating to racial and ethnic minorities with disabilities. In determining the issues to be studied, the commission will solicit suggestions from the public, and in the course of studying an issue, the commission will hold public hearings in order to receive testimony from experts or interested members of the general public. Public hearings are to be held in a time and place that allows for the attendance of members of the general public most affected by the issue being studied by the commission.

The commission will consist of 20 total members, including 10 non-voting, ex officio members and 10 voting, public members, with four public members appointed by the Governor and three public members appointed each by the Speaker of the General Assembly and the President of the Senate. The bill requires the public membership to include two members with academic expertise in the field of statistical analysis and eight members who are leaders of community-based or civil rights organizations with experience in community and urban affairs in traditionally underserved populations. Of those eight members, four will be required to have experience in cross-disability issues. The non-voting, ex officio members are to include representatives of the Department of Community Affairs, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the Department of Human Services, the Department of Health, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Law and Public Safety, the Department of Education, the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Banking and Insurance, and the Juvenile Justice Commission.

All appointments to the commission are to be made within 90 days of the effective date of this bill, and the commission will be required to hold its first meeting within 150 days of the effective date. The Governor will appoint a chairperson of the commission from one of the six members appointed by the President of the Senate and the

Speaker of the General Assembly. The commission will meet at least once a month, at a time and place to be determined by the chairperson.

The commission is to select its first topic of study within 60 days of its first meeting. The commission will then be required to study the unique concerns of racial or ethnic minorities with disabilities and the effect their status as a racial or ethnic minority has on exacerbating the impact of the disability. The studies are to include, but not be limited to, disparities in the treatment of racial or ethnic minorities and their access to educational opportunities, employment opportunities, health care, and other services provided by both the private and public sectors. Following its review of an issue, the commission will provide a report to the Governor and the Legislature detailing its findings and making recommendations as to any potential legislative and administrative remedies that may be appropriate. The commission will be required to issue at least one report each calendar year, no later than October 31.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2020-2021 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.