

ASSEMBLY STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO
ASSEMBLY, No. 4295

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: SEPTEMBER 19, 2024

The Assembly State and Local Government Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 4295.

As amended, this bill establishes the New Jersey-India Commission as a permanent commission in the Department of State. The commission is to consist of no less than 35 and no more than 45 members, who are to be appointed by, and serve at the pleasure of, the Governor. After an initial term for all members that expires December 31, 2027, the bill provides that eight members are to be appointed upon the recommendation of the Legislature; four members are to be recommended by the Speaker of the General Assembly; and four members are to be recommended by the President of the Senate. The commission members recommended by the Legislature are to serve during the two-year legislative term in which the appointment is made. The remaining members of the commission are required to be public members appointed by the Governor who are to serve for three years. All members of the commission are to serve without compensation.

The Governor is also required to appoint a chairperson or co-chairpersons from the commission members. The commission is allowed to establish subcommittees as deemed necessary and may appoint additional chairpersons or co-chairpersons from among the commission members to chair any established subcommittees.

The purpose of the commission is to:

- advance bilateral trade and investment between New Jersey and India;
- encourage mutual economic support between New Jersey and India;
- encourage mutual investment in the infrastructure and economies of New Jersey and India;
- promote cultural and educational exchanges between New Jersey and India, including in areas of research, science, and technology;
- study and initiate joint action on policy issues of mutual interest to New Jersey and India; and
- address similar issues as determined by the commission.

The commission is authorized to raise funds to carry out the purposes set forth in this bill, in addition to any annual appropriations made to the Department of State for administrative expenses.

The commission is required to provide a biennial report to the Governor and to the Legislature. The first report is required within one year of the bill's effective date, and each subsequent report is required by the same date every two years. The reports are to be submitted in writing and include any recommendations deemed appropriate by the commission to effectuate the purposes outlined in the bill.

The bill specifies that any provisions of Executive Order No. 354 of 2024, issued by Governor Murphy, which are not inconsistent with this bill are to remain in effect.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to establish the New Jersey-India Commission as a permanent commission in the Department of State and provides for transition of an existing commission, established pursuant to Executive Order No. 354 of 2024, into the new permanent commission.

The amendments removed provisions in the bill that established the advisory role and the original membership of the temporary commission. The amendments also removed provisions in the bill granting the commission authority to call upon executive branch departments and agencies to assist with its duties.

The amendments supplemented the bill to include the membership of the permanent commission. The permanent commission is to consist of no less than 35 and no more than 45 members, who are to be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor. After an initial term for all members, that expires December 31, 2027, eight members are to be appointed upon the recommendation of the Legislature, four members are to be recommended by the Speaker of the General Assembly, and four members are to be recommended by the President of the Senate. The commission members recommended by the Legislature are to serve during the two-year legislative term in which the appointment is made. The remaining members of the commission are required to be public members appointed by the Governor who are to serve for three years. All members of the commission are to serve without compensation.

The amendments also require the Governor to appoint a chairperson or co-chairpersons from the commission members. The commission is allowed to establish subcommittees as deemed necessary and may appoint additional chairpersons or co-chairpersons from among the commission members to chair any established subcommittees.

The amendments allow the commission to raise funds to carry out the purposes set forth in the bill, in addition to any annual

appropriations made to the Department of State for administrative expenses.

The amendments revise the report required by the commission. The report is now required on a biennial basis, instead of annually, apart from the first report which is required one year after the effective date. The report is to be submitted in writing and include any recommendations deemed appropriate by the commission to effectuate its purposes.

Lastly, the amendments allow any provisions of Executive Order No. 354 of 2024, which are not inconsistent with this bill, to remain in effect.