

SENATE, No. 2491

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
216th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 14, 2014

Sponsored by:

Senator BOB SMITH

District 17 (Middlesex and Somerset)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes position of State Oceanographer.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT establishing the position of State Oceanographer,
2 supplementing Title 13 of the Revised Statutes, and amending
3 P.L.2007, c.288.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*

7
8 1. (New section) a. The Governor shall, in consultation with
9 the Executive Dean of Agriculture and Natural Resources at
10 Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, and with the advice
11 and consent of the Senate, appoint a State Oceanographer, who shall
12 be a resident of the State and a tenured faculty member at the
13 university with expertise in oceanography. The State
14 Oceanographer shall serve within the New Jersey Agricultural
15 Experiment Station at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey,
16 for a term of five years, or until a successor is appointed, and may
17 be reappointed. The State Oceanographer shall provide advice and
18 assistance, when requested, to the Governor, the Legislature, and
19 the various departments and agencies of State government on issues
20 involving the ocean, and serve as a member of the New Jersey
21 Coastal and Ocean Protection Council established pursuant to
22 section 3 of P.L.2007, c.288 (C.13:19-36). The State
23 Oceanographer may also be appointed to serve as a member of any
24 authority, board, or commission on which the State
25 Oceanographer's expertise would be useful.

26 b. The State Oceanographer shall serve without compensation,
27 but shall be entitled to the actual and necessary expenses incurred in
28 the performance of the duties of the position pursuant to this
29 section, within the limits of funds appropriated or made available
30 therefor.

31
32 2. Section 3 of P.L.2007, c.288 (C.13:19-36) is amended to
33 read as follows:

34 3. a. There is established in the Department of Environmental
35 Protection the New Jersey Coastal and Ocean Protection Council.

36 b. The council shall consist of nine members as follows:

37 (1) the Commissioner of Environmental Protection, or the
38 commissioner's designee, who shall serve ex officio;

39 (2) the Chief Executive Officer of the New Jersey Economic
40 Development Authority, or the chief executive officer's designee,
41 who shall serve ex officio;

42 (3) the Executive Director of the Division of Travel and
43 Tourism in the New Jersey Commerce Commission, or the
44 executive director's designee, who shall serve ex officio; **[and]**

45 (4) **[six]** the State Oceanographer, who shall serve ex officio;

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 and

2 (5) five public members to be appointed by the Governor with
3 the advice and consent of the Senate for four-year terms, except that
4 of those first appointed, one shall be appointed for a term of one
5 year, one for a term of two years, **two** one for a term of three
6 years and two for a term of four years. Of the public members: one
7 shall be a representative of the commercial fishing industry,
8 representing the range of commercial fisheries in the State,
9 including shellfish and finfish fisheries and fisheries in State and
10 federal waters; one shall be a representative of the recreational
11 fishing industry, representing the range of recreational fisheries in
12 the State, including the hook and line and the party and charter boat
13 fishing industry; **one** shall be a representative of the academic
14 community with expertise, knowledge, or experience in coastal or
15 ocean ecosystems and habitat; **one** shall be a representative of an
16 environmental organization with expertise, knowledge, or
17 experience in coastal or ocean ecosystems and habitat; one shall be
18 a representative of a public interest group with expertise,
19 knowledge, or experience in coastal or ocean ecosystems and
20 habitat; and one shall be a representative of a non-profit
21 organization with expertise, knowledge, or experience in habitat
22 protection and land preservation.

23 c. Any vacancy in the membership shall be filled in the same
24 manner as the original appointment.

25 d. The members of the council shall serve without
26 compensation, but may be reimbursed for necessary expenses
27 incurred in the performance of their duties, within the limits of
28 funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the council for its
29 purposes.

30 e. The council shall be entitled to the assistance and service of
31 the employees of any State, county or municipal department, board,
32 bureau, commission, authority, or agency as it may require and as
33 may be available to it for its purposes, and to employ stenographic
34 and clerical assistance and to incur traveling or other miscellaneous
35 expenses as may be necessary in order to perform its duties, within
36 the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to it
37 for its purposes. The department shall provide primary staff
38 support to the council.

39 f. The council shall organize as soon as possible after the
40 appointment of its members and shall annually elect a chairperson
41 from among its members, and a secretary who need not be a
42 member of the council. The council shall meet at the call of the
43 chairperson or the Commissioner of Environmental Protection or
44 when requested by any four members of the council.

45 g. A majority of the membership of the council shall constitute
46 a quorum for the transaction of council business.

- 1 h. The members of the council shall be subject to the "New
2 Jersey Conflicts of Interest Law," P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-12 et
3 seq.).
- 4 i. The council shall be subject to the provisions of the "Senator
5 Byron M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act," P.L.1975, c.231
6 (C.10:4-6 et seq.).
- 7 j. A true copy of the minutes of every meeting of the council
8 shall be prepared and made available to the public. The minutes
9 shall also be made available on the department's Internet website.
10 (cf: P.L.2007, c.288, s.3)
- 11
- 12 3. This act shall take effect immediately.
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15 STATEMENT

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17 This bill establishes the position of State Oceanographer. The
18 State Oceanographer, who would be a resident of the State and a
19 tenured faculty member at Rutgers, the State University of New
20 Jersey, would be appointed by the Governor, in consultation with
21 the Executive Dean of Agriculture and Natural Resources at
22 Rutgers, and with the advice and consent of the Senate. The State
23 Oceanographer would serve within the New Jersey Agricultural
24 Experiment Station for a term of five years, uncompensated, and
25 could be reappointed for additional terms. The State
26 Oceanographer would provide advice and assistance, when
27 requested, to the Governor, the Legislature, and other State
28 governmental entities, and serve as a member of the New Jersey
29 Coastal and Ocean Protection Council, established pursuant to
30 section 3 of P.L.2007, c.288 (C.13:19-36). The State
31 Oceanographer could also be appointed to serve as a member of any
32 authority, board, or commission on which the State
33 Oceanographer's expertise would be useful.