

ASSEMBLY, No. 2288

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 27, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman WILLIAM F. MOEN, JR.

District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

Assemblywoman BRITNEE N. TIMBERLAKE

District 34 (Essex and Passaic)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblyman Spearman

SYNOPSIS

“New Jersey Intergenerational Poverty Reduction Act.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/15/2020)

1 AN ACT concerning poverty and economic insecurity in New Jersey
2 and supplementing Title 44 of the Revised Statutes.

3
4 BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6
7 1. This act shall be known, and may be cited, as the
8 “Intergenerational Poverty Reduction Act.”

9
10 2. As used in this act:

11 “Anti-poverty program” means a program that has the primary
12 goal of lifting individuals out of poverty or improving economic
13 opportunities for individuals, and which operates, in whole or in part,
14 with funding from the State or federal government.

15 “Asset poverty” means the inability of an individual to access
16 wealth resources sufficient to provide for the individual’s basic needs
17 for a period of three months or more.

18 “Child” means an individual who is under the age of 18.

19 “Commission” means the New Jersey Commission on Poverty
20 Elimination and Economic Security that is established under section
21 3 of this act.

22 “Cycle of poverty” means the set of factors or events by which the
23 long-term poverty of an individual is likely to continue and be
24 experienced by each child of the individual when the child becomes
25 an adult, in the absence of outside intervention.

26 “Deep poverty” means an economic condition where an individual
27 or family has a total annual income that is less than 50 percent of the
28 federal poverty level for the individual or family, as provided by the
29 United States Census Bureau in its annual reports on Income,
30 Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States.

31 “Department” means the Department of Human Services.

32 “Deprivation” means an individual’s lack of adequate nutrition,
33 health care, housing, or other resources necessary to satisfy the
34 individual’s basic needs.

35 “Digital divide” means the gap that exists between individuals,
36 households, businesses, and geographic areas at different
37 socioeconomic levels in relation to their ability to access various
38 information and communication technologies, including computers
39 and the Internet, and which results in an imbalance in physical access
40 to appropriate technology and the resources, education, and skills that
41 are needed to effectively use that technology for a wide variety of
42 activities.

43 “Disconnected youth” means an individual who is 16 to 25 years-
44 of-age and is both unemployed and not enrolled in school.

45 “Disparate impact” means the historic and ongoing impacts that
46 result from a pattern and practice of discrimination in employment,
47 education, housing, banking, or other aspects of the economy,
48 society, or culture, regardless of whether those patterns or practices

1 were motivated by discriminatory intent, and which have an adverse
2 impact on minorities, women, or other protected groups.

3 “Economic insecurity” means the inability of an individual to
4 financially cope with adverse or costly life events and recover from
5 the monetary consequences of those events, or an individual’s lack
6 of economic means sufficient to maintain an adequate standard of
7 living.

8 “Economic outcome” means a change in the economic status,
9 economic instability, or economic security of an individual,
10 household, or other population group that is attributable to a planned
11 intervention, benefit, service, or series of interventions, benefits, and
12 services, regardless of whether the intervention, benefit, or service
13 was intended to change the economic status, economic stability, or
14 economic security of the individual, household, or other population
15 group.

16 “Economic security” means that an individual has access to the
17 financial means and supports that are necessary to effectively cope
18 with, and recover from the monetary consequences of, adverse or
19 costly life events while maintaining an adequate standard of living.

20 “Intergenerational poverty” means poverty in which two or more
21 successive generations of a family continue in the cycle of poverty
22 and government dependence. “Intergenerational poverty” does not
23 include situational poverty.

24 “Poverty” means an economic condition in which an individual or
25 family has a total annual income that is less than the federal poverty
26 level for the individual or family, as provided by the United States
27 Census Bureau in its annual reports on Income, Poverty, and Health
28 Insurance Coverage in the United States.

29 “Poverty measure” means a uniform method for measuring
30 poverty in the State, which uses indicators other than traditional
31 income-based measures to provide a detailed picture of low-income
32 populations and populations living in poverty in a manner that
33 meaningfully accounts for non-income-related factors contributing to
34 poverty, including, but not limited to: available access to health care,
35 housing, proper nutrition, and quality education; the number of
36 individuals kept out of poverty through the use of government
37 supports; the number of individuals who are impoverished due to
38 medical expenses, child-care expenses, or work expenses; the rate of
39 food insecurity; the number of individuals in asset poverty; the
40 number of disconnected youth; the teen birth rate; the participation
41 rate in State and federal anti-poverty programs for all eligible
42 populations; the number of individuals who do not use a bank or
43 similar financial institution; the cost-of-living differences in various
44 regions of the State, including urban and rural regions; the income
45 levels necessary to achieve economic security and a livable standard
46 of living in different regions of the State; the impact of rising income
47 inequality; the impact of the digital divide; and the impact of trauma
48 on intergenerational poverty.

1 “Situational poverty” means temporary poverty that is generally
2 traceable to a specific incident or time period within the lifetime of
3 an individual, and which is not carried over into the next generation.

4 “Strategic plan” means the strategic plan that is adopted by the
5 commission, pursuant to section 4 of this act, to reduce and ultimately
6 eliminate poverty and economic insecurity in the State.

7 “Two-generation approach” means an approach to breaking the
8 cycle of poverty by improving family economic security through
9 programs that create opportunities for, and address the needs of,
10 parents and children together.

11 “Working group” means the Interagency Working Group on
12 Poverty and Economic Insecurity that is established pursuant to
13 section 7 of this act.

14

15 3. a. The New Jersey Commission on Poverty Elimination and
16 Economic Security is established in, but not of, the Department of
17 Human Services. Notwithstanding this allocation, the commission
18 shall be independent of any supervision or control by the department
19 or any officer or employee thereof.

20 b. The purpose of the commission shall be to:

21 (1) improve policymakers’ understanding of the root causes of
22 poverty and economic insecurity, including the societal, economic,
23 and cultural factors that contribute to or facilitate poverty or
24 economic insecurity, and the reasons that poverty and economic
25 insecurity persist in the State;

26 (2) expand policymakers’ understanding of poverty by
27 establishing and distinguishing between a standard that measures an
28 individual’s level of freedom from deprivation and a standard that
29 measures an individual’s level of economic security;

30 (3) educate policymakers on the impact that poverty has on other
31 measures of economic stability and economic outcomes, including
32 educational attainment levels, rates of incarceration, lifetime
33 earnings rates, access to housing, access to health care, and health
34 care outcomes;

35 (4) support governmental efforts to ensure that residents of the
36 State have the equal opportunity to achieve economic security; and

37 (5) develop a strategic plan, as provided by section 4 of this act,
38 and otherwise provide recommendations to the legislative, executive,
39 and judicial branches of government, to reduce and ultimately
40 eliminate poverty and economic insecurity in the State.

41 c. The commission shall be composed of 25 voting members, as
42 follows:

43 (1) four members of the Legislature, one of whom shall be
44 appointed by the President of the Senate, one of whom shall be
45 appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, one of whom
46 shall be appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate, and one of
47 whom shall be appointed by the Minority Leader of the General
48 Assembly;

1 (2) one member of the judiciary, who shall be appointed by the
2 Chief Justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court;

3 (3) twenty public members, including: (a) one representative of
4 an organization that focuses on rural poverty, who shall serve as co-
5 chair of the commission; (b) one representative of an organization
6 that focuses on urban and suburban poverty, who shall serve as co-
7 chair of the commission; (c) two individuals who have lived
8 experience with deep poverty; (d) one representative of an
9 organization that advocates for health care access, affordability, and
10 availability; (e) one representative of an organization that advocates
11 for individuals with mental illness; (f) one representative of an
12 organization that advocates for children and youth; (g) one
13 representative of an organization that advocates for equity and
14 equality in education; (h) one representative of an organization that
15 advocates for individuals who are homeless; (i) one representative of
16 a Statewide hunger relief organization; (j) one representative of an
17 organization that advocates for military veterans; (k) one
18 representative of an organization that advocates for individuals with
19 disabilities; (l) one representative of an organization that advocates
20 for immigrants; (m) one representative of a Statewide faith-based
21 organization that provides direct social services in the State; (n) one
22 representative of an organization that advocates for economic
23 security for women; (o) one representative of an organization that
24 advocates for adults who are 60 years of age or older; (p) one
25 representative of a labor organization that represents primarily low-
26 wage and middle-wage earners; (q) one person representing school
27 districts in the State; (r) one person representing the interests of
28 county governments in the State; and (s) one person representing the
29 interests of municipal governments in the State.

30 d. The members of the interagency working group established
31 pursuant to section 7 of this act shall additionally serve as non-voting,
32 ex officio members of the commission.

33 e. Of the public members appointed to the commission, four
34 shall be appointed by the Governor, four shall be appointed by the
35 President of the Senate, four shall be appointed by the Speaker of the
36 General Assembly, four shall be appointed by the Minority Leader of
37 the Senate, and four shall be appointed by the Minority Leader of the
38 General Assembly. Not more than 10 public members shall be of the
39 same political party. Each public member shall serve for a term of
40 five years, but of the public members first appointed, four shall serve
41 an initial term of one year, four shall serve an initial term of two
42 years, four shall serve an initial term of three years, four shall serve
43 an initial term of four years, and four shall serve an initial term of
44 five years. Any public member of the commission may be removed
45 by the Governor, for cause, following a public hearing.

46 f. Public members appointed to the commission shall:

47 (1) be appointed within 45 days after the effective date of this act;

- 1 (2) be residents of New Jersey who have lived in the State for at
2 least one year;
- 3 (3) maintain residence in the State during the members'
4 respective terms of service on the commission;
- 5 (4) reflect the racial, gender, and geographic diversity of this
6 State;
- 7 (5) include representatives of regions in the State that are
8 experiencing significant economic insecurity and the highest rates of
9 deep poverty; and
- 10 (6) be eligible for reappointment to the commission upon the
11 conclusion of their respective membership terms.
- 12 g. Vacancies in the membership of the commission shall be
13 filled in the same manner provided for the original appointments.
- 14 h. The commission shall organize as soon as practicable after the
15 appointment of a majority of its members, but in no case more than
16 60 days after the effective date of this act.
- 17 i. Members of the commission shall serve without
18 compensation, but may be reimbursed for travel and other
19 miscellaneous expenses incurred in the necessary performance of
20 their duties, within the limits of funds made available to the
21 commission for its purposes.
- 22 j. In effectuating its purposes and duties under this act, the
23 commission may establish subcommittees to address specific issues
24 or populations, and may collaborate with individuals who have
25 relevant expertise and are not members of the commission, as
26 necessary to assist the commission or a subcommittee thereof in
27 carrying out its duties.
- 28 k. The commission shall meet at such times and places as the co-
29 chairs may designate, but not less than once per year.
- 30 l. A majority plus one of the voting members appointed to the
31 commission shall constitute a quorum. The commission may conduct
32 business without a quorum, but may only vote on a recommendation
33 when a quorum is present.
- 34 m. All actions undertaken by the commission or by any
35 subcommittee established thereby shall be approved by a majority
36 vote of the commission or the subcommittee, as applicable.
- 37 n. The commission shall be entitled to receive assistance and
38 services from any State, county, or municipal department, board,
39 commission, or agency, as it may require, and as may be available to
40 it for its purposes. The commission is further authorized to consult
41 with any association, organization, or individual having knowledge
42 of, or experience with, poverty or economic insecurity. The
43 Department of Human Services shall provide staff and administrative
44 support as may be necessary to assist the commission in carrying out
45 its duties.
- 46 o. The commission may solicit, receive, and expend any grant
47 moneys or other funds that may be made available, for the

1 commission's purposes, by any government agency or any private
2 for-profit or not-for-profit organization or entity.

3

4 4. a. Not later than 18 months after the effective date of this
5 act, the commission shall develop and adopt a strategic plan to
6 address poverty and economic insecurity in the State.

7 b. The goals of the strategic plan shall be to:

8 (1) ensure that State programs and services targeting poverty and
9 economic insecurity reflect the goal of helping individuals and
10 families to rise above poverty and achieve long-term economic
11 stability, rather than simply providing relief from deprivation;

12 (2) eliminate disparate rates of poverty, deep poverty, child
13 poverty, and intergenerational poverty that are based on race,
14 ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation or identity, English
15 language proficiency, ability, or geographic location in a rural, urban,
16 or suburban area;

17 (3) reduce deep poverty in the State by 50 percent by 2026;

18 (4) eliminate child poverty in the State by 2031; and

19 (5) eliminate all poverty in the State by 2036.

20 c. In developing the strategic plan, the commission shall:

21 (1) collaborate with the interagency working group established
22 pursuant to section 7 of this act, including with respect to the sharing
23 and analysis of relevant data and information;

24 (2) identify the unmet needs, if any, of children, adults, and
25 families who are living in deep poverty or are experiencing
26 intergenerational poverty in the State;

27 (3) review each program and service that targets poverty and
28 economic insecurity in the State in order to: (a) determine which
29 programs and services are the most effective and of the highest
30 importance in reducing poverty and economic insecurity in the State;
31 (b) identify shortcomings in program and service areas; (c) analyze
32 the capacity of the State's existing programs and services to address
33 the unmet needs identified under paragraph (2) of this subsection;
34 and (d) where appropriate, identify new programs or services that can
35 be used to address the unmet needs identified under paragraph (2) of
36 this subsection;

37 (4) study the feasibility of using public and private partnerships
38 and social impact bonds to improve innovation and cost-effectiveness
39 in the development of programs and the delivery of services that
40 advance the goals of the strategic plan;

41 (5) hold at least six public hearings in different geographic
42 regions of the State, including regions that have disparate rates of
43 poverty or historical experience with economic insecurity, in order to
44 collect information, take testimony, and solicit input and feedback
45 from interested parties, including members of the public who have
46 personal experience with State programs and services targeting
47 poverty, deep poverty, child poverty, intergenerational poverty, and

1 economic insecurity. Information collected pursuant to this
2 paragraph shall be made available to the public; and

3 (6) request and receive from any State or local government
4 agency relevant information relating to poverty or economic security
5 in the State, including, but not limited to, statistical data, audit and
6 other reporting data, planning data, and projections for the future.

7 d. At a minimum, the strategic plan shall:

8 (1) identify, or provide for the development of, fact-based
9 measures to be used both in identifying rates of poverty and economic
10 insecurity in the State and in evaluating the long-term effectiveness
11 of existing and proposed programs and services targeting poverty and
12 economic insecurity in the State;

13 (2) evaluate the current status of, and establish interim goals for
14 the improvement, throughout the State, of: (a) access to adequate
15 food and nutrition; (b) access to affordable and quality health care;
16 (c) equal access to safe and affordable housing; (d) equal access to
17 quality education and training; (e) equal access to affordable, quality
18 post-secondary education options; (f) access to dependable and
19 affordable transportation; (g) access to quality and affordable child
20 care; (h) opportunities to engage in meaningful and sustainable work
21 that pays a living wage; (i) barriers that prevent low-income
22 individuals in poverty from accessing available affordable housing,
23 nutritious food, quality health care, education, transportation, and
24 child care, from utilizing programs and services available to address
25 poverty and economic instability, or from accessing or taking
26 advantage of meaningful and sustainable work opportunities; (j)
27 equal access to justice through a fair system of criminal justice that
28 does not, in effect, criminalize poverty; (k) access to adequate
29 income supports; and (l) retirement security;

30 (3) provide policy and fiscal recommendations regarding the
31 actions that should be undertaken by State, local, and private actors,
32 as appropriate, to:

33 (a) increase the enrollment of individuals, children, and families
34 in programs and services targeting poverty and economic insecurity,
35 and reduce the complexity and difficulty of program and service
36 enrollment procedures;

37 (b) maximize the effectiveness of programs and services
38 targeting poverty and economic instability in order to consistently
39 achieve positive economic outcomes;

40 (c) expand the reach of, and the number of eligible persons and
41 families that are served by, programs and services targeting poverty
42 and economic insecurity in the State, and ensure that relevant State
43 and local agencies have adequate resources and funding, as necessary
44 to implement and expand programs and services targeting poverty
45 and economic insecurity and to promote public awareness of such
46 programs, particularly in historically disenfranchised communities;

47 (d) ensure that income and asset limitations established as a
48 condition of eligibility for programs and services targeting poverty

- 1 and economic instability do not create gaps in necessary service and
2 benefit delivery systems, do not prevent beneficiaries from
3 improving their long-term economic outcomes or achieving long-
4 term economic stability and independence, and do not restrict access
5 to benefits as individuals and families attempt to transition out of the
6 programs and attain economic self-sufficiency;
- 7 (e) improve the ability of community-based organizations to
8 participate in the development and implementation of State and local
9 programs focused on poverty and economic instability;
- 10 (f) improve the ability of low-income individuals, unemployed
11 individuals, and individuals living in poverty to access critical job
12 training and skills upgrade programs, as well as quality jobs that
13 provide economic security and can help the individual and the
14 individuals' family to rise above poverty;
- 15 (g) connect low-income children, disconnected youth, and the
16 families thereof with education providers, job training opportunities,
17 and available jobs in the communities in which the children or young
18 adults live;
- 19 (h) improve communication and collaboration between State
20 agencies and local governments in association with the establishment
21 and implementation of programs and services targeting poverty and
22 economic insecurity;
- 23 (i) create or improve efficiencies in the administration and
24 coordination of State and local programs and services targeting
25 poverty and economic insecurity;
- 26 (j) ensure that the State's public benefits programs, emergency
27 programs, discretionary economic programs, and other programs and
28 services targeting poverty and economic insecurity are sufficiently
29 funded to enable the State to mount effective responses to economic
30 downturns and increases in economic insecurity and poverty rates;
- 31 (k) develop and implement programs, services, and policies that
32 use a two-generation approach when analyzing pertinent data; and
- 33 (l) facilitate the development of public and private partnerships
34 and the use of social impact bonds to advance the goals of the
35 strategic plan, to the extent that such actions are deemed to be
36 feasible pursuant to paragraph (4) of subsection c. of this section;
- 37 (4) identify best practices for the collection of data related to:
- 38 (a) the reduction of poverty and economic insecurity in the State;
- 39 (b) the reduction of racial, ethnic, age, gender, sexual orientation
40 and sexual identity-based disparities in the rates of poverty and
41 economic instability;
- 42 (c) the accurate evaluation of program and service effectiveness,
43 efficiency, and impact on economic outcomes for individuals,
44 families, and communities receiving benefits and services;
- 45 (d) the streamlining of program and service enrollment and
46 eligibility processes and determinations;
- 47 (e) the improvement of long-term economic outcomes for
48 individuals enrolled in service and benefit programs;

- 1 (f) the reduction of individuals' and families' reliance on public
- 2 programs;
- 3 (g) the improvement of access and connections to employment
- 4 that provides a living wage;
- 5 (h) the improvement of economic security;
- 6 (i) the improvement of retirement security;
- 7 (j) the improvement of the State's understanding of the impact of
- 8 extreme weather and natural disasters on economically vulnerable
- 9 communities, and the improvement of those communities' resilience
- 10 to, and recovery from, extreme weather and natural disasters; and
- 11 (k) the improvement of access to employment-based benefits.
- 12 e. In addition to the content described in subsection d. of this
- 13 section, the strategic plan shall contain all of the following:
- 14 (1) a suggested timeline for the stages of implementation in
- 15 association with each recommendation developed under paragraph
- 16 (3) of subsection d. of this section;
- 17 (2) short-term, intermediate-term, and long-term benchmarks to
- 18 measure the State's progress toward achieving the general goals of
- 19 the strategic plan, as outlined in subsection b. of this section, and the
- 20 specific interim goals identified in the plan under subsection d. of
- 21 this section; and
- 22 (3) a summary of the extent to which the commission has
- 23 collaborated with the interagency working group with respect to the
- 24 review and analysis of relevant data as provided by paragraph (1) of
- 25 subsection c. of this section.
- 26 f. For each recommendation adopted pursuant to paragraph (3)
- 27 of subsection d. of this section, the strategic plan shall identify, in
- 28 measurable terms, the actual or potential impact the recommendation
- 29 will have on poverty and economic insecurity in the State, and on
- 30 achieving the general goals of the strategic plan as outlined in
- 31 subsection b. of this section, and the more specific interim goals
- 32 identified under paragraph (2) of subsection d. of this section.
- 33
- 34 5. The commission shall submit to the Governor, and, pursuant
- 35 to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the Legislature, the
- 36 following written reports:
- 37 a. an interim report on the commission's activities, which shall
- 38 be submitted not later than six months after the effective date of this
- 39 act;
- 40 b. a report summarizing the commission's activities and
- 41 containing a copy of the commission's strategic plan, which report
- 42 shall be submitted immediately following the commission's adoption
- 43 of the strategic plan pursuant to section 4 of this act, and not later
- 44 than 18 months after the effective date of this act; and
- 45 c. an annual report evaluating the status of the implementation
- 46 of the strategic plan and the recommendations contained therein, and
- 47 providing any supplemental recommendations the commission
- 48 deems necessary to reduce or eliminate poverty and economic

1 insecurity in the State, which report shall be submitted one year after
2 the publication of the commission's strategic plan and annually
3 thereafter.

4

5 6. a. The State Treasurer shall include, in the materials
6 submitted to the Legislature outlining the Governor's proposed
7 annual budget, a description of any budget proposals or other
8 activities, ongoing projects, or plans of the executive branch that are
9 designed to meet the goals and objectives of the strategic plan.

10 b. The information provided pursuant to this section shall
11 include the following:

12 (1) an accounting of the savings to the State that will be realized
13 from any increased efficiencies in the delivery of services;

14 (2) any savings realized from a reduction in the number of
15 individuals living in poverty or from a reduction in the demand for
16 need-based services and benefits;

17 (3) a projection of any increase in revenue collections that is
18 anticipated due to any increase in the number of individuals who are
19 employed and pay taxes into the State Treasury; and

20 (4) any other information related to the proposed annual budget
21 that the State Treasurer believes is relevant to the implementation of
22 the strategic plan or the achievement of the goals or objectives
23 established therein.

24

25 7. a. There is established, in, but not of, the Department of
26 Human Services, an Interagency Working Group on Poverty and
27 Economic Insecurity. Notwithstanding this allocation, the
28 interagency working group shall be independent of any supervision
29 or control by the department or any officer or employee thereof.

30 b. The Interagency Working Group on Poverty and Economic
31 Insecurity shall be composed of the following ex officio members:

32 (1) the Commissioner of Human Services or a designee thereof
33 who is an assistant commissioner within the Department of Human
34 Services;

35 (2) the Commissioner of Health or a designee thereof who is an
36 assistant commissioner within the Department of Health;

37 (3) the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development or a
38 designee thereof who is an assistant commissioner within the
39 Department of Labor and Workforce Development;

40 (4) the Commissioner of Education or a designee thereof who is
41 an assistant commissioner within the Department of Education;

42 (5) the Commissioner of Community Affairs or a designee
43 thereof who is an assistant commissioner within the Department of
44 Community Affairs;

45 (6) the Commissioner of Corrections or a designee thereof who is
46 an assistant commissioner within the Department of Corrections;

47 (7) the Commissioner of Agriculture or a designee thereof who is
48 an assistant commissioner within the Department of Agriculture; and

1 (8) the State Treasurer or a designee thereof who is an assistant
2 treasurer within the Department of the Treasury.

3 c. The working group shall meet at least four times a year.

4
5 8. a. The Interagency Working Group on Poverty and
6 Economic Insecurity shall have the power and duty to:

7 (1) identify, analyze, gain an understanding of, and propose
8 recommendations to address, the root causes of poverty and
9 economic insecurity, including the social, economic, and cultural
10 factors that contribute to poverty and economic insecurity;

11 (2) identify, analyze, gain an understanding of, and propose
12 recommendations to address intergenerational poverty, in accordance
13 with the provisions of subsection b. of this section;

14 (3) study and measure the effect that poverty and economic
15 insecurity have on: (a) worker productivity and economic output;
16 and (b) the health and welfare of children, including children's access
17 to health care, housing, proper nutrition, and quality education;

18 (4) identify State programs, including those programs related to
19 economic development, job creation, job training, the environment,
20 disaster relief, hazard mitigation, extreme weather, and climate
21 change, which require reform in order to better target resources to
22 low-income, minority, rural, urban, and other populations or
23 geographic areas suffering from economic insecurity and disparate
24 rates of poverty;

25 (5) measure the fiscal impact on the State of successfully
26 transitioning individuals and families from poverty to long-term
27 economic stability;

28 (6) establish an ongoing system of data sharing, policy
29 coordination, and communication among and within State agencies,
30 local agencies, and other organizations, including the commission,
31 which are involved in the provision of programs or services that are
32 aimed at improving economic security and eliminating poverty;

33 (7) identify knowledge gaps, research needs, and policy and
34 program deficiencies associated with economic insecurity and
35 poverty;

36 (8) assist the commission in the development of the strategic plan
37 under section 4 of this act, including through the sharing of data and
38 information identified under paragraphs (1) through (7) of this
39 subsection, and the analysis of that data and information; and

40 (9) coordinate the implementation of the strategic plan adopted
41 pursuant to section 4 of this act, including by advising and assisting
42 relevant agencies in the implementation of the strategic plan,
43 advising relevant agencies on specific programmatic and policy
44 matters related to the strategic plan, providing relevant subject matter
45 expertise to each agency for the purposes of implementing the
46 strategic plan, and identifying and addressing issues that may
47 influence the future implementation of the strategic plan.

- 1 b. In fulfilling its duties under paragraph (2) of subsection a. of
2 this section, in relation to the study of intergenerational poverty, the
3 working group shall:
- 4 (1) identify children who are at risk of continuing in the cycle of
5 poverty, absent outside intervention;
- 6 (2) identify and develop effective and efficient plans, programs,
7 and recommendations to help at-risk children escape the cycle of
8 poverty;
- 9 (3) to the extent authorized by law, implement data-driven
10 policies and programs to address issues related to poverty, public
11 assistance, education, economic development, criminal justice, and
12 other areas, as may be necessary to measurably reduce the incidence
13 of children in the State who remain in poverty as they become adults;
- 14 (4) establish and facilitate improved cooperation, data sharing,
15 and policy coordination among all persons, including, but not limited
16 to, State agencies and case workers, who are engaged in the rescue
17 of children from intergenerational poverty;
- 18 (5) study and measure the effect of intergenerational poverty on
19 the ability of parents and children to achieve economic stability,
20 including the effect on educational attainment, rates of incarceration,
21 lifetime earnings, access to healthcare, and access to housing;
- 22 (6) study, evaluate, and report on the status and effectiveness of
23 policies, procedures, and programs that provide services to children
24 in this State who are affected by intergenerational poverty;
- 25 (7) study and evaluate policies, procedures, and programs
26 implemented by other states and nongovernmental entities that
27 address the needs of children affected by intergenerational poverty;
- 28 (8) identify State policies, procedures, and programs or federal
29 requirements that are impeding efforts to help children affected by
30 intergenerational poverty in the State to escape the cycle of poverty;
31 and
- 32 (9) facilitate the development and implementation of programs
33 and policies that use a two-generation approach.
- 34 c. Fiscal impact measurements performed under paragraph (5)
35 of subsection a. of this section may include an analysis of the
36 following:
- 37 (1) any reduction in the long-term costs of social safety net
38 programs;
- 39 (2) any reduction in long-term health care costs resulting from the
40 improving health of households that formerly faced economic
41 insecurity or poverty;
- 42 (3) any increase in State and local revenues that is attributable to
43 new taxpaying individuals as a result of increased employment and
44 disposable income;
- 45 (4) any reductions in enrollment in, or the costs of, need-based
46 benefits and services programs; and

1 (5) any improvements to the overall economy of this State and
2 any reduced financial pressures on the State and local governments
3 that result from implementation of the strategic plan.

4 d. Not later than September 1 of each year, the working group
5 shall post on the department's Internet website, and submit to the
6 Governor, and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-
7 19.1), to the Legislature, a written report that includes:

8 (1) relevant data assessing the scope and depth of
9 intergenerational poverty in the State;

10 (2) a 20-year history of poverty rates in this State, with a focus
11 on any reduction or increase in the rates that has occurred during the
12 previous 10-year period or since the inception of the working group;

13 (3) a summary of actions taken and outcomes obtained by the
14 working group in fulfilling its duties under this section;

15 (4) a summary of progress that has been made in relation to the
16 reduction of poverty and economic insecurity in the State, including
17 policies or procedures that have been implemented to reduce or
18 eliminate the cycle of poverty and intergenerational poverty as a
19 result of the data collected by the working group; and

20 (5) any recommendations for legislative or regulatory action that
21 can be undertaken to further the goals of the strategic plan.

22
23 9. a. The department shall establish and maintain an electronic
24 data tracking system to track intergenerational poverty in the State.

25 b. The data tracking system established pursuant to this section
26 shall have the ability to do all of the following:

27 (1) identify and track groups that have a high risk of experiencing
28 intergenerational poverty;

29 (2) identify incidents, patterns, and trends that explain or
30 contribute to intergenerational poverty; and

31 (3) gather and track available local, State, and national data on:
32 (a) official poverty rates; (b) child poverty rates; (c) years spent by
33 an individual in childhood poverty; (d) years spent by an individual
34 in adult poverty; (e) public assistance program enrollment rates; and
35 (f) related poverty information.

36 c. The department shall:

37 (1) develop and implement methods to integrate, compare,
38 analyze, and validate data for the purposes described under
39 subsection b. of this section;

40 (2) protect the privacy of an individual living in poverty by
41 ensuring that the use and distribution of data contained within the
42 data tracking system is done in compliance with federal and State
43 laws; and

44 (3) include a summary of the data, findings, and potential
45 additional uses of the data tracking system in each annual report that
46 is filed by the interagency working group under subsection d. of
47 section 8 of this act.

1 child poverty in the State by 2031; and 5) eliminate all poverty in the
2 State by 2036.

3 In developing the strategic plan, the commission will be required
4 to collaborate with the interagency working group established under
5 the bill, and will further be required to hold at least six public
6 hearings in different geographic regions of the State, including
7 regions that have disparate rates of poverty or historical experience
8 with economic insecurity, in order to collect information, take
9 testimony, and solicit input and feedback from interested parties,
10 including members of the public who have personal experience with
11 State programs and services targeting poverty, deep poverty, child
12 poverty, intergenerational poverty, and economic insecurity.
13 Information collected will be made available to the public.

14 The strategic plan is to:

15 1) identify, or provide for the development of, fact-based
16 measures to be used both in identifying rates of poverty and economic
17 insecurity in the State and in evaluating the long-term effectiveness
18 of existing and proposed programs and services targeting poverty and
19 economic insecurity in the State;

20 2) evaluate the current status of, and establish interim goals for
21 the improvement, throughout the State, of: access to adequate food
22 and nutrition; access to affordable and quality health care; equal
23 access to safe and affordable housing; equal access to quality
24 education and training; equal access to affordable, quality post-
25 secondary education options; access to dependable and affordable
26 transportation; access to quality and affordable child care;
27 opportunities to engage in meaningful and sustainable work that pays
28 a living wage; barriers that prevent low-income individuals in
29 poverty from accessing available affordable housing, nutritious food,
30 quality health care, education, transportation, and child care, from
31 utilizing programs and services available to address poverty and
32 economic instability, or from accessing or taking advantage of
33 meaningful and sustainable work opportunities; equal access to
34 justice through a fair system of criminal justice that does not, in
35 effect, criminalize poverty; access to adequate income supports; and
36 retirement security;

37 3) provide various policy and fiscal recommendations regarding
38 the actions that should be undertaken by State, local, and private
39 actors, as appropriate, to address certain specified issues related to
40 poverty and economic insecurity. For each recommendation, the
41 strategic plan is to identify, in measurable terms, the actual or
42 potential impact the recommendation will have on poverty and
43 economic insecurity in the State and on the achievement of the goals
44 of the strategic plan; and

45 4) identify best practices for the collection of data on various
46 issues related to poverty and economic insecurity.

47 The strategic plan is also to contain: 1) a suggested timeline for
48 the stages of implementation for each recommendation developed

1 thereunder; 2) short-term, intermediate-term, and long-term
2 benchmarks to measure the State's progress toward achieving the
3 general goals of the strategic plan, as outlined in the bill, and the
4 specific interim goals identified in the plan itself; and 3) a summary
5 of the extent to which the commission has collaborated with the
6 interagency working group with respect to the review and analysis of
7 relevant data on poverty and economic insecurity.

8 The commission will be required to submit a number of different
9 reports to the Governor and the Legislature, including: 1) an interim
10 report on the commission's activities, which is to be submitted within
11 six months after the effective date of this act; 2) a written report
12 summarizing the commission's activities and containing a copy of
13 the commission's strategic plan, which is to be submitted
14 immediately following the commission's adoption of the strategic
15 plan, and not later than 18 months after the effective date of this act;
16 and 3) an annual report evaluating the status of the implementation
17 of the strategic plan, and providing any supplemental
18 recommendations the commission deems necessary to reduce or
19 eliminate poverty and economic insecurity in the State, the first of
20 which is to be submitted one year after the publication of the
21 commission's strategic plan.

22 The bill requires the State Treasurer to include, in the materials
23 that are submitted to the Legislature outlining the Governor's
24 proposed annual budget, a description of any budget proposals or
25 other activities, ongoing projects, or plans of the executive branch
26 that are designed to meet the goals and objectives of the strategic
27 plan.

28 The Interagency Working Group on Poverty and Economic
29 Insecurity, established under the bill, is to be composed of the
30 Commissioners of Human Services, Health, Labor and Workforce
31 Development, Education, Community Affairs, Corrections, and
32 Agriculture, and the State Treasurer, or their designees who are to be
33 employed at the assistant commissioner or assistant treasurer level of
34 the respective department. The working group will be required to
35 meet at least four times a year, and will have the power and duty to:

36 1) identify, analyze, gain an understanding of, and propose
37 recommendations to address, the root causes of poverty and
38 economic insecurity, including the social, economic, and cultural
39 factors that contribute to poverty and economic insecurity;

40 2) identify, analyze, gain an understanding of, and propose
41 recommendations to address intergenerational poverty, in accordance
42 with the bill's provisions;

43 3) study and measure the effect that poverty and economic
44 insecurity have on worker productivity and economic output, and on
45 the health and welfare of children, including children's access to
46 health care, housing, proper nutrition, and quality education;

47 4) identify State programs, including those programs related to
48 economic development, job creation, job training, the environment,

1 disaster relief, hazard mitigation, extreme weather, and climate
2 change, which require reform in order to better target resources to
3 low-income, minority, rural, urban, and other populations or
4 geographic areas suffering from economic insecurity and disparate
5 rates of poverty;

6 5) measure the fiscal impact on the State of successfully
7 transitioning individuals and families from poverty to long-term
8 economic stability;

9 6) establish an ongoing system of data sharing, policy
10 coordination, and communication among and within State agencies,
11 local agencies, and other organizations, including the commission,
12 which are involved in the provision of programs or services that are
13 aimed at improving economic security and eliminating poverty;

14 7) identify knowledge gaps, research needs, and policy and
15 program deficiencies associated with economic insecurity and
16 poverty;

17 8) assist the commission in the development of the strategic plan,
18 including through the sharing and analysis of relevant data and
19 information; and

20 9) coordinate the implementation of the strategic plan, including
21 by advising and assisting relevant agencies in the implementation of
22 the strategic plan, advising relevant agencies on specific
23 programmatic and policy matters related to the strategic plan,
24 providing relevant subject matter expertise to each agency for the
25 purposes of implementing the specific recommendations in the
26 strategic plan, and identifying and addressing issues that may
27 influence the future implementation of the strategic plan.

28 Not later than September 1 of each year, the working group will
29 be required to post on the Internet website of the Department of
30 Human Services, and submit to the Governor and Legislature, a
31 written report that includes: 1) relevant data assessing the scope and
32 depth of intergenerational poverty in the State; 2) a 20-year history
33 of poverty rates in this State, with a focus on any reduction or
34 increase in the rates that has occurred during the previous 10-year
35 period or since the inception of the working group; 3) a summary of
36 actions taken and outcomes obtained by the working group in
37 fulfilling its duties; 4) a summary of progress that has been made in
38 relation to the reduction of poverty and economic insecurity in the
39 State, including policies or procedures that have been implemented
40 to reduce or eliminate the cycle of poverty and intergenerational
41 poverty as a result of the data collected by the working group; and 5)
42 any recommendations for legislative or regulatory action that can be
43 undertaken to further the goals of the strategic plan.

44 Finally, the bill requires the Department of Human Services to
45 establish and maintain an electronic data tracking system to track
46 intergenerational poverty in the State. The data tracking system is to
47 identify and track groups that have a high risk of experiencing
48 intergenerational poverty; identify incidents, patterns, and trends that

1 explain or contribute to intergenerational poverty; and gather and
2 track available local, State, and national data on official poverty
3 rates, child poverty rates, years spent by an individual in childhood
4 poverty, years spent by an individual in adult poverty, public
5 assistance program enrollment rates, and related poverty information.
6 A summary of the data, findings, and potential additional uses of the
7 system is to be included in each annual report that is submitted by the
8 interagency working group under the bill's provisions.