ASSEMBLY, No. 3299

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 25, 2020

Sponsored by:
Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE
District 37 (Bergen)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes Task Force on Prevention of Sexual Violence.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

AN ACT establishing the "Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Violence.

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

1. a. There is established the "Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Violence." The purpose of the task force is to study and evaluate current and best practice standards concerning sexual violence prevention strategies and initiatives, identify problems with, and areas for improvement of, the provision of sexual violence prevention services, and develop recommendations for reducing acts of sexual violence and improving the quality and scope of sexual violence prevention services provided or supported by State government in an effort to keep communities safe.

b. The task force shall consist of 19 members as follows: the Commissioners of Children and Families, Education, and Health, the Attorney General, and the Secretary of Higher Education, or their designees, who shall serve as ex officio members; two representatives of the New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault, one of whom shall specialize in the provision of sexual violence prevention services, and one of whom shall have experience in developing policy relating to the prevention of sexual violence; three representatives from county-based rape crisis centers with expertise in sexual violence prevention, of whom one each shall be from the northern, central, and southern regions of the State; a representative from each of the following: the New Jersey Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers, Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey, New Jersey Child Assault Prevention, and Garden State Equality; and five public members with demonstrated expertise or interest in issues related to the work of the task force, one of whom shall be appointed by the Governor, and four, of whom one each shall be appointed by the Senate President, the Senate Minority Leader, the Speaker of the General Assembly, and the Assembly Minority Leader.

c. Appointments to the task force shall be made within 60 days after the effective date of this act. Vacancies in the membership of the task force shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments were made.

d. The task force shall organize as soon as may be practicable, but no later than 90 days after the appointment of its members, and shall select a chairperson from among the public members. The chairperson shall appoint a secretary who need not be a member of the task force. The task force members shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the task force for its purposes.

e. The Division on Women in the Department of Children and Families shall supply such stenographic, clerical, and other administrative assistants and professional staff as the task force requires to carry out its duties.

f. The task force is entitled to the assistance and services of the employees of any State department, board, bureau, commission, or agency as it may require and as may be available for its purposes.

2. The task force shall:

a. gather information from experts and review and evaluate existing research and literature, including any nationally recognized best practices, on the prevention of sexual violence;

b. review current Statewide strategies for preventing acts of sexual violence; and

c. develop a Statewide plan to reduce acts of sexual violence and mechanisms to increase public awareness about sexual violence and facilitate sexual violence prevention strategies.

3. The task force shall present a report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the Legislature no later than one year after the organization of the task force.

4. This act shall take effect immediately, and the task force shall expire 30 days after the issuance of its report.

STATEMENT

This bill establishes the 19-member "Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Violence." The purpose of the task force would be to: study and evaluate current and best practice standards concerning sexual violence prevention strategies and initiatives; identify problems with, and areas for improvement of, the provision of sexual violence prevention services; and develop recommendations for reducing acts of sexual violence and improving the quality and scope of sexual violence prevention services provided or supported by State government in an effort to keep communities safe.

The task force would consist of the following members: the Commissioners of Children and Families, Education, and Health, the Attorney General, and the Secretary of Higher Education, or their designees, who would serve as ex-officio members; two representatives of the New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault, one of whom would be a staff member and one of whom would be a member of the Board of Trustees; three representatives from county-based rape crisis centers with expertise in sexual violence prevention, of whom one each would be from the northern, central,

and southern regions of the State; a representative from each of the following organizations: the New Jersey Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers, Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey, New Jersey Child Assault Prevention, and Garden State Equality; and five public members with demonstrated expertise or interest in issues related to the work of the task force. One of the public members would be appointed by the Governor, and four, of whom one each would be appointed by the Senate President, the Senate Minority Leader, the Speaker of the General Assembly, and the Assembly Minority Leader.

Under the provisions of the bill, the duties of the task force would be to: gather information from experts and review and evaluate existing research and literature, including any nationally recognized best practices, on the prevention of sexual violence; review current Statewide strategies for preventing acts of sexual violence; and develop a Statewide plan to reduce acts of sexual violence and mechanisms to increase public awareness about sexual violence and facilitate sexual violence prevention strategies.

The task force would organize no later than 90 days after the appointment of its members, present a report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the Legislature no later than one year after the organization of the task force, and would expire 30 days after the issuance of its report.