

ASSEMBLY, No. 4144

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 11, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman CAROL A. MURPHY

District 7 (Burlington)

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

Assemblywoman GABRIELA M. MOSQUERA

District 4 (Camden and Gloucester)

Co-Sponsored by:

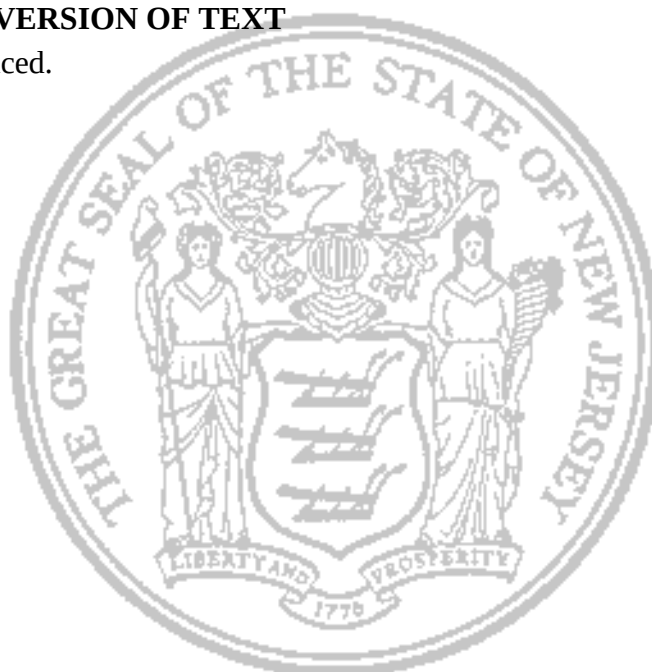
Assemblyman Dancer, Assemblywoman Stanfield and Assemblyman Giblin

SYNOPSIS

Establishes task force to study the impact of and response to COVID-19 pandemic in New Jersey.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 7/20/2020)

1 **AN ACT** establishing a task force to study the impact of and
2 response to the COVID-19 pandemic in New Jersey.

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

6
7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

8 The COVID-19 outbreak spread across the United States and the
9 world. The outbreak was first identified in Wuhan, Hubei, China,
10 in December 2019, and was recognized as a pandemic by the World
11 Health Organization on March 11, 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic
12 caused a significant health crisis for the residents of the State of
13 New Jersey. New Jersey's healthcare system was severely
14 overburdened, and New Jersey's financial health and the financial
15 health of its residents was disrupted. Many businesses and
16 government facilities closed, while others reduced operations. The
17 schools in New Jersey closed, affecting teachers, students, and
18 parents. The establishment of a task force to examine the impact
19 and how the State of New Jersey responded to the crisis is
20 necessary and appropriate.

21
22 2. There is established a task force, to be known as the "New
23 Jersey COVID-19 Review Task Force," to consist of 16 members.
24 The Secretary of State, the Commissioner of the Department of
25 Health, the Commissioner of the Department of Labor and
26 Workforce Development, the Commissioner of the Department of
27 Education, the Commissioner of the Department of Human
28 Services, and the State Treasurer, or their designees, shall serve as
29 ex-officio members. The President of the Senate shall appoint two
30 members, one of whom shall be a representative of the League of
31 Municipalities, and one of whom shall be a representative of the
32 New Jersey Hospital Association. The Minority Leader of the
33 Senate shall appoint two members, one of whom shall be a member
34 of the public with a child in the New Jersey school system, and one
35 of whom shall be a member of the public with a child with a
36 disability in the New Jersey school system. The Speaker of the
37 General Assembly shall appoint two members, one of whom shall
38 be a representative of the New Jersey Association of Counties, and
39 one of whom shall be a representative of the New Jersey State
40 Nurses Association. The Minority Leader of the General Assembly
41 shall appoint two members, one of whom shall be a member of the
42 public with a child in the New Jersey school system, and one of
43 whom shall be a member of the public with a child with a disability
44 in the New Jersey school system. The Governor shall appoint two
45 members, one of whom shall be a representative of the New Jersey
46 Business and Industry Association, and one of whom shall be a
47 member of the general public who resided in New Jersey during the
48 COVID-19 pandemic.

1 3. The members of the task force shall be appointed and shall
2 hold their initial organizational meeting within 45 days after the
3 Governor declares an end to the COVID-19 State of Emergency.
4 The members shall elect one of the members to serve as chair and
5 one of the members to serve as vice-chair. The chair may appoint a
6 secretary, who need not be a member of the task force. The
7 members shall serve without compensation, but shall be eligible for
8 reimbursement for necessary and reasonable expenses incurred in
9 the performance of their official duties within the limits of funds
10 appropriated or otherwise made available to the task force.

11
12 4. The task force shall meet at the call of the chair. The task
13 force shall hold at least three public hearings in different parts of
14 the State and elicit testimony from the public at such times and
15 places as the chair shall designate. A meeting of the task force shall
16 be called at the request of nine of the task force's members and nine
17 members of the task force shall constitute a quorum at any meeting
18 thereof.

19
20 5. It shall be the duty of the task force to study the impact of,
21 and New Jersey's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. At a
22 minimum, the task force shall:

- 23 a. review the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the State's
24 healthcare system;
25 b. review the screening, assessment, testing, and restriction
26 requirements utilized during the pandemic;
27 c. analyze the financial impact of the pandemic on the State
28 and its residents;
29 d. review complaints of price gouging;
30 e. assess the actions taken to reduce the risk of exposure and
31 spread;
32 f. assess the actions taken related to the education of students
33 in the k-12 schools in the State, especially students with a
34 disability; and
35 g. consider such other matters as the members of the task force
36 may deem appropriate.

37
38 6. The task force shall make recommendations for legislation
39 or such other action as it deems appropriate with regard to
40 improving, expanding, and facilitating a response to a Statewide or
41 national medical emergency.

42
43 7. The task force shall be entitled to call to its assistance and
44 avail itself of the services of the employees of any State, county, or
45 municipal department, board, bureau, commission or agency, as it
46 may require and as may be available for its purposes, and to employ
47 stenographic and clerical assistance and incur traveling and other
48 miscellaneous expenses as may be necessary in order to perform its

1 duties, within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made
2 available to the task force.

3

4 8. The task force shall report its findings and recommendations
5 to the Legislature, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164
6 (C.52:14-19.1), and the Governor within eighteen months of its
7 initial organizational meeting.

8

9 9. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire after
10 the task force submits its findings and recommendations to the
11 Governor and the Legislature.

12

13

14 STATEMENT

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16 This bill establishes a 16 member task force, to be known as the
17 “New Jersey COVID-19 Review Task Force,” to examine the
18 impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to New Jersey, and New Jersey
19 response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

20 At a minimum, the task force will:

21 review the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the State’s
22 healthcare system;

23 review the screening, assessment, testing, and restriction
24 requirements utilized during the pandemic;

25 analyze the financial impact of the pandemic on the State and its
26 residents;

27 review complaints of price gouging;

28 assess the actions taken to reduce the risk of exposure and
29 spread;

30 assess the actions taken related to the education of students in k-
31 12 schools in the State, especially students with a disability; and

32 consider such other matters as the members of the task force may
33 deem appropriate.

34 The task force may make recommendations for legislation or
35 such other action as it deems appropriate with regard to improving,
36 expanding, and facilitating a response to a Statewide or national
37 medical emergency.

38 The task force will report its findings and recommendations to
39 the Legislature and the Governor within eighteen months of its
40 initial organizational meeting. The task force will expire after the
41 submission of its report.