ASSEMBLY, No. 4536

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED AUGUST 13, 2020

Sponsored by:
Assemblywoman CAROL A. MURPHY
District 7 (Burlington)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes State Commission on Minority Affairs within Department of State.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

AN ACT establishing the State Commission on Minority Affairs and supplementing Title 52 of the Revised Statutes.

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

1. a. There is established in the Department of State the State Commission on Minority Affairs. The commission shall consist of the following members:

the Secretary of State or a designee;

the Attorney General or a designee

the Chief Diversity Officer or a designee;

the Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development or a designee;

the Commissioner of the Department of Education or a designee;

two members of the Senate, each of whom shall be of different political parties, appointed by the President of the Senate to serve as members for the two-year legislative term during which they are appointed;

two members of the Senate, each of whom shall be of different political parties, appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate to serve as members for the two-year legislative term during which they are appointed;

two members of the General Assembly, each of whom shall be of different political parties, appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly to serve for the two-year legislative term during which they are appointed; and

two members of the General Assembly, each of whom shall be of different political parties, appointed by the Minority Leader of the General Assembly to serve as members for the two-year legislative term during which they are appointed; and

sixteen members from the public.

The public members shall be appointed as follows:

four public members, no more than two of whom shall be of the same political party, shall be appointed by the President of the Senate;

four public members, no more than two of whom shall be of the same political party, shall be appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly; and

eight public members, no more than four of whom shall be of the same political party, shall be appointed by the Governor.

The public members shall be residents of this State, chosen with due regard to race, ethnicity, religion, and gender while ensuring broad geographic representation.

b. Each public member of the commission shall serve for a term of three years, except that of the initial public members so appointed: one member appointed by the President of the Senate, one member appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly,

and two members appointed by the Governor shall serve for a term of one year; one member appointed by the President of the Senate, one member appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, and three members appointed by the Governor shall serve for a term of two years; and two members appointed by the President of the Senate, two members appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, and three members appointed by the Governor shall serve for a term of three years. Public members shall be eligible for reappointment. They shall serve until their successors are appointed and qualified, and the term of the successor of any incumbent shall be calculated from the expiration of the term of that incumbent. A vacancy occurring other than by expiration of term shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment but for the unexpired term only. Public members may serve for no more than two consecutive terms.

c. The members of the commission shall serve without compensation but shall be entitled to reimbursement for all necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

d. The Secretary of State, or a designee, shall serve as the chair and the members of the commission shall elect annually one of the public members to serve as vice-chair. The chair may appoint a secretary, who need not be a member of the commission. The presence of a majority of the full membership of the commission shall constitute a quorum to conduct official business.

e. The commission shall meet quarterly and at such other times as designated by the chair.

f. The commission may hire an executive director and other personnel necessary to carry out its duties and functions, but the commission may also engage the services of volunteer workers and consultants without compensation as is necessary from time to time.

2. a. The State Commission on Minority Affairs shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

study matters affecting the social and economic welfare of minorities residing in the State;

collect and disseminate information on activities, programs, and essential services available to minorities in the State;

study the availability of employment for minorities in this State, and the manner in which minorities are employed;

study the ways in which minorities can be encouraged to start and manage their own businesses successfully;

study the availability of affordable housing;

in cooperation with the Division on Civil Rights, promote public information regarding State laws that prohibit discriminatory practices and procedures pursuant to which aggrieved persons may file complaints or otherwise take action to remedy such discriminatory practices;

promote the creation of networks within the business community between majority-owned and minority-owned businesses;

advise the Governor on matters relating to minorities and of concern to minorities; and

recommend legislation to the Governor.

b. The commission is authorized to call upon any department, office, division or agency of the State, or of any county, municipality or school district of the State, to supply data, reports and other information, personnel, and assistance as it deems necessary to discharge its duties and responsibilities pursuant to this section.

c. The commission shall submit an annual report of its activities through the Department of State to the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the Legislature on or before December 31 of each year.

3. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill would establish the State Commission on Minority Affairs within the Department of State. The commission would be responsible for:

studying matters affecting the social and economic welfare of minorities residing in the State;

collecting and disseminating information on activities, programs, and essential services available to minorities in the State;

studying the availability of employment for minorities in this State, and the manner in which minorities are employed;

studying the ways in which minorities can be encouraged to start and manage their own businesses successfully;

studying the availability of affordable housing;

in cooperation with the Division on Civil Rights, promoting public information regarding State laws that prohibit discriminatory practices and procedures pursuant to which aggrieved persons may file complaints or otherwise take action to remedy such discriminatory practices

promoting the creation of networks within the business community between majority-owned and minority-owned businesses;

advising the Governor on matters relating to minorities and of concern to minorities; and

recommending legislation to the Governor.