

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 186

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 14, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman AURA K. DUNN

District 25 (Morris and Somerset)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblymen Simonsen and McClellan

SYNOPSIS

Establishes task force to study ways to increase diversity within law enforcement agencies.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 9/14/2020)

1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** establishing a task force to study ways to
 2 increase diversity and community representation within law
 3 enforcement agencies.

4
 5 **WHEREAS**, Law enforcement officers serve a vital role in all
 6 communities of this State by enforcing the law, controlling crime,
 7 and maintaining public order and safety; and

8 **WHEREAS**, In addition to the regular training law enforcement officers
 9 receive, their own personal experiences and backgrounds can be
 10 extremely valuable in their daily community interactions; and

11 **WHEREAS**, When law enforcement officers have a personal
 12 understanding of the common experiences of members of a
 13 community, it helps to promote trust between law enforcement
 14 officers and the community; and

15 **WHEREAS**, In recognition of this, many law enforcement agencies
 16 have taken measures to increase the diversity of their officers, such
 17 as focusing recruitment efforts on underrepresented groups and
 18 providing mentoring to new recruits; and

19 **WHEREAS**, Despite these ongoing efforts to increase diversity within
 20 law enforcement agencies, many still do not reflect the diversity of
 21 the communities they serve, which may put law enforcement
 22 agencies at a disadvantage when trying to build community
 23 relationships; and

24 **WHEREAS**, It is important for law enforcement agencies to expand
 25 their efforts to diversify, and to consider all possible strategies that
 26 may help to accomplish this goal, so that law enforcement officers
 27 and the communities they serve can work together to keep all
 28 residents of the State of New Jersey safe; now, therefore,

29
 30 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
 31 *State of New Jersey:*

32
 33 1. a. There is established the “New Jersey Diversity in Law
 34 Enforcement Task Force.” The task force shall study ways to
 35 increase diversity and community representation within law
 36 enforcement agencies throughout the State of New Jersey including
 37 State, local, and municipal police departments.

38 b. The task force shall consist of 13 members as follows:

39 (1) one member of the Senate, appointed by the President of the
 40 Senate, and one member of the General Assembly, appointed by the
 41 Speaker of the General Assembly, who shall each be of different
 42 political parties;

43 (2) the Attorney General, or a designee;

44 (3) the President of the New Jersey State Policemen’s
 45 Benevolent Association, or a designee;

46 (4) the President of the New Jersey State Troopers Fraternal
 47 Association, or a designee;

- 1 (5) the President of the New Jersey State Fraternal Order of
2 Police, or a designee;
- 3 (6) the National President of the National Organization of Black
4 Law Enforcement Executives, or a designee;
- 5 (7) the Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties
6 Union of New Jersey, or a designee;
- 7 (8) the President of the New Jersey State Conference of the
8 National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
9 (NAACP), or a designee;
- 10 (9) two representatives of a police department in New Jersey,
11 appointed by the Governor. One of these representatives should
12 represent an urban community and one of these representatives
13 should represent a non-urban community; and
- 14 (10) two members of the public, appointed by the Governor.
15 One of these public members should represent an urban community
16 and one of these public members should represent a non-urban
17 community.
- 18 c. The members of this task force shall be appointed within 30
19 days of the effective date of this resolution. The task force shall
20 organize as soon as practicable after the appointment of the task
21 force's members and the task force shall choose a chairperson from
22 among its members. The presence of seven members shall
23 constitute a quorum.
- 24 d. The task force shall meet regularly as the task force
25 determines or at the call of the chairperson. The task force shall
26 hold at least three public hearings in different parts of the State and
27 elicit testimony from the public at such times and places as the chair
28 shall designate.
- 29 e. The members of the task force shall serve without
30 compensation.
- 31 f. Any vacancies in the membership of the task force shall be
32 filled in the same manner as the original appointment.
- 33 g. The Department of Law and Public Safety shall provide
34 stenographic, clerical, and other administrative assistance and
35 professional staff as the task force requires to carry out the task
36 force's work. The task force shall be entitled to call to the task
37 force's assistance and avail itself of the services of the employees
38 of any State, county, or municipal department, board, bureau,
39 commission, or agency as the task force may require and as may be
40 available for the task force's purposes.
- 41
- 42 2. a. The task force shall study methods by which to increase
43 diversity and community representation within law enforcement
44 agencies across the State of New Jersey. The task force shall
45 specifically:
 - 46 (1) examine current data, research, and policies related to
47 diversity issues within law enforcement agencies;

- 1 (2) examine current diversity present within law enforcement
- 2 agencies across the State including State, local, and municipal
- 3 police departments;
- 4 (3) identify effective strategies to increase diversity and
- 5 community representation within the State's law enforcement
- 6 agencies; and
- 7 (4) develop recommendations to implement those strategies
- 8 within law enforcement agencies based on the task force's findings.
- 9 b. The task force shall prepare and submit to the Governor and
- 10 to the Legislature, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164
- 11 (C.52:14- 19.1), a final report no later than one year after the
- 12 organization of the task force.
- 13
- 14 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately and shall
- 15 expire 30 days after the issuance of the task force's final report and
- 16 recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature.
- 17
- 18

19 STATEMENT

20

21 This joint resolution establishes the "New Jersey Diversity in

22 Law Enforcement Task Force" to study ways to increase diversity

23 and community representation within law enforcement agencies

24 throughout the State of New Jersey including State, local, and

25 municipal police departments.

26 Law enforcement officers serve a vital role in all communities

27 throughout the State of New Jersey by enforcing the law,

28 controlling crime, and maintaining public order and safety.

29 However, law enforcement officers are not always representative of

30 the communities they serve. In recognition of this, many law

31 enforcement agencies have taken measures to increase the diversity

32 of their officers, such as focusing recruitment efforts on

33 underrepresented groups and providing mentoring to new recruits.

34 Despite these efforts to increase diversity within law enforcement

35 agencies, many still do not reflect the diversity of the communities

36 they serve. This lack of diversity and community representation

37 within law enforcement agencies can make it increasingly difficult

38 for law enforcement officers to build lasting community

39 relationships. For these reasons, it is important for law enforcement

40 agencies to expand their efforts to diversify, so that law

41 enforcement officers and the communities they serve can work

42 together to keep all residents of the State of New Jersey safe.

43 The task force shall consist of 13 members with representation

44 from the Senate, the General Assembly, the Attorney General, the

45 President of the New Jersey State Policemen's Benevolent

46 Association, the President of the New Jersey State Troopers

47 Fraternal Association, the President of the New Jersey State

48 Fraternal Order of Police, the National President of the National

1 Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, the Executive
2 Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey, the
3 President of the New Jersey State Conference of the National
4 Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), two
5 representatives of local police departments throughout the State,
6 and two representatives of the public. The task force shall examine
7 current data, research, and policies related to diversity issues within
8 law enforcement agencies and examine current diversity present
9 within law enforcement agencies across the State including State,
10 local, and municipal police departments. In addition, the task force
11 shall identify effective strategies to increase diversity and
12 community representation within the State's law enforcement
13 agencies and develop recommendations to implement those
14 strategies within law enforcement agencies. Within a year after the
15 organization of the task force, the task force shall submit a report to
16 the Governor and the Legislature of the task force's findings and
17 recommendations.