SENATE, No. 2805

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED AUGUST 13, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator LINDA R. GREENSTEIN
District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes “Police Body Camera Implementation Task Force” to study and make recommendations concerning use of body cameras by law enforcement agencies in this State.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

AN ACT establishing the "Police Body Camera Implementation Task Force."

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

1. a. There is established a task force to be known as the "Police Body Camera Implementation Task Force" whose charge shall be to study and make recommendations on the use of body cameras by certain law enforcement officers in this State, including but not limited to requirements for implementation and development of best practices for the use of these cameras and rules for access to and use of body camera recordings. For the purposes of this act, "body camera" shall mean a device worn by a law enforcement officer that electronically records audio and video while the officer acts in the performance of the officer's official duties.

b. The task force shall consist of 17 members as follows:

(1) the Chair of the Senate Law and Public Safety Committee;

(2) the Chair of the Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee;

(3) the Attorney General or a designee, who shall serve ex officio;

(4) the New Jersey Public Defender or a designee, who shall serve ex officio;

(5) a representative of the New Jersey State Policemen's Benevolent Association, Inc.;

(6) a representative of the New Jersey Fraternal Order of Police;

(7) a representative of the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police;

(8) a representative of the County Prosecutors' Association of New Jersey;

(9) the Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey;

(10) a representative of the Police Institute at the Rutgers School of Criminal Justice;

(11) a representative of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People;

(12) a public member appointed by the Governor who is a law enforcement officer in a municipality that currently utilizes body cameras;

(13) a public member appointed by the Governor who is a victims' rights advocate;

(14) a member to be appointed by the minority leader of the Senate;

(15) a member to be appointed by the minority leader of the General Assembly;

(16) a mayor representing an urban municipality as designated by the President of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities; and

(17) a mayor representing a suburban municipality as designated by the President of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities.

c. All appointments to the task force shall be made within 30 days of the effective date of this act. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments. The Attorney General shall serve as the chair of the task force. The chair shall appoint a secretary who need not be a member of the task force. The members of the task force shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed, within the limits of funds made available to the task force, for necessary travel expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

d. The chair shall call an initial meeting of the task force within seven days of the appointment of a majority of its members and hold hearings at the times and in the places it may deem appropriate and necessary to fulfill its charge. The task force shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail itself of the services of the employees of any State, county or municipal department, board, bureau, commission or agency as it may require and as may be available to it for its purposes.

e. The task force may seek the advice of experts, such as persons specializing in the fields of criminology, psychology, education, criminal or family law, or other related fields as deemed appropriate by the membership of the task force.

f. A report of the task force's findings and recommendations shall be submitted to the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C:52:14-19.1), to the President of the Senate and Speaker of the General Assembly no later than December 30, 2021.

2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire upon submission of the task force's final report to the Governor and Legislature.

STATEMENT

This bill establishes a "Police Body Camera Implementation Task Force" to study and make recommendations on the use of body cameras by certain law enforcement officers in this State including, but not limited to, requirements for implementation and development of best practices for the use of these cameras and rules for access to and use of body camera recordings.

The bill defines a "body camera" as a device worn by a law enforcement officer that electronically records audio and video while the officer acts in the performance of the officer's official duties.

The 17-member task force under the bill would be comprised of the following members: (1) the Chair of the Senate Law and Public Safety Committee; (2) the Chair of the Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee; (3) the Attorney General or a designee, who shall serve ex officio; (4) the New Jersey Public Defender or a designee, who shall serve ex officio; (5) a representative of the New Jersey State Policemen's Benevolent Association, Inc.; (6) a representative of the New Jersey Fraternal Order of Police; (7) a representative of the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police; (8) a representative of the of the County Prosecutors' Association of New Jersey; (9) the Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey; (10) a representative of the Police Institute at the Rutgers School of Criminal Justice; (11) a representative of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; (12) a public member appointed by the Governor who is a law enforcement officer in a municipality that currently utilizes police body cameras; (13) a public member appointed by the Governor who is a victims' rights advocate; (14) a member to be appointed by the minority leader of the Senate; (15) a member to be appointed by the minority leader of the General Assembly; (16) a mayor representing an urban municipality as designated by the President of the New Jersey League of Municipalities; and (17) a mayor representing a suburban municipality as designated by the President of the New Jersey League of Municipalities.

The bill requires the task force appointments to be made within 30 days of the bill's effective date. The Attorney General is to serve as the chair of the task force and is required to appoint a secretary. The chair is to call an initial meeting of the task force within seven days of the appointment of a majority of its members and hold hearings at the times and in the places it may deem appropriate and necessary to fulfill its charge. The task force may seek the advice of experts, such as persons specializing in the fields of criminology, psychology, education, criminal or family law, or other related fields.

Under the bill, the task force is required to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature no later than December 30, 2021.