SENATE, No. 3241

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED DECEMBER 10, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator JOSEPH P. CRYAN
District 20 (Union)

SYNOPSIS

Requires chief law enforcement officer of municipal police departments to hold two community roundtables on police relations each year.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

AN ACT concerning certain police community roundtables and supplementing chapter 14 of Title 40A of the New Jersey statutes.

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

1. a. The chief law enforcement officer of the municipality or, if the municipality does not have a chief law enforcement officer, the Superintendent of State Police, shall sponsor an open community roundtable discussion on police relations at least twice per calendar year. One community roundtable shall be held in the spring and one community roundtable shall be held in the fall.

b. To maximize community participation, the sponsor of the community roundtable shall provide ample notice to the community, hold the roundtable at a central location in the municipality, and schedule the roundtable in the evening.

c. Topics to be addressed at the community roundtable shall include, but not be limited to:

(1) race relations and racial profiling;

(2) recruitment, selection, and retention of officers;

(3) training and education of recruits and supervisors;

(4) regulation of body worn cameras; and

(5) use of force, police misconduct, and internal affairs investigations.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill requires the chief law enforcement officer of every municipal police department in this State to sponsor at least two community roundtables on police relations each year.

The bill specifically requires the chief law enforcement officer of the municipality or, if the municipality does not have a chief law enforcement officer, the Superintendent of State Police to sponsor an open community roundtable on police relations in the spring and fall of each calendar year. The bill requires these community roundtables to held in the evening at a central location in the municipality with ample notice in order to maximize public participation.

Topics to be addressed at the community roundtables include race relations and racial profiling; recruitment, selection, and retention of officers; training and education of recruits and supervisors; regulation of body worn cameras; and use of force, police misconduct, and internal affairs investigations.

According to the sponsor, the grassroots, diverse discussions that are the basis of community roundtables are essential in addressing the complex and divisive issues involving citizens and police officers. Community roundtables are an ideal forum for addressing these critical public issues in a democratic and collaborative way.