SENATE, No. 3250

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED DECEMBER 10, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator VIN GOPAL
District 11 (Monmouth)
Senator KRISTIN M. CORRADO
District 40 (Bergen, Essex, Morris and Passaic)

Co-Sponsored by:
Senators Pou and Testa

SYNOPSIS
Establishes “Voting Improvement Task Force.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/19/2021)
AN ACT establishing the “Voting Improvement Task Force.”

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

1. a. There is established in, but not of, the Department of State a task force to be known as the “Voting Improvement Task Force.” The task force shall be independent of any supervision or control by the department except as expressly authorized under this act.

b. The task force shall consist of nine members:
   (1) the Secretary of State, ex officio, or the secretary’s designee;
   (2) five county election officials to be appointed, one each, by the Governor, Senate President, Senate Minority Leader, Speaker of the General Assembly, and the Assembly Minority Leader with no two appointees coming from the same county; and
   (3) three members of the public with experience in vote-by-mail processing or election reform advocacy to be appointed, one each, by the Governor, Senate President, and Speaker of the General Assembly.

c. The members of the task force shall be appointed and shall hold their initial organizational meeting within 45 days after the effective date of this act. At the initial organizational meeting, the members shall elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson from among the members of the task force by a majority vote. The task force may appoint a secretary, who need not be a member of the task force.

d. Members of the task force shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed, except for the Secretary of the State, for necessary and reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their duties within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the task force for its purposes.

e. Any vacancy in the membership of the task force shall be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made.

f. It shall be the duty of the task force to:
   (1) evaluate the vote-by-mail process in the State;
   (2) examine ways to process and count vote-by-mail and provisional ballots more quickly in the State;
   (3) explore the feasibility of implementing ranked-choice voting in the State; and
   (4) research additional methods of expanding and improving voting by mail in the State.

The task force shall hold at least three public hearings, one each in the Northern, Central, and Southern parts of the State, to receive testimony from the public and elections experts on matters concerning voting by mail.

g. The task force shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail itself of the services of the officials and employees of the State and its political subdivisions and their departments, boards, bureaus,
commissions, and agencies as it may require and as may be available
to it for the purposes of the task force. The Division of Elections in
the Department of State shall provide staff support services to the
task force.

h. The task force shall report its findings, conclusions, and
recommendations to the Governor and pursuant to section 2 of
P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the Legislature no later than one
year following the first meeting of the task force. The task force shall
expire upon the submission of its report, pursuant to this section.

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

STATEMENT

This bill establishes in, but not of, the Department of State a task
force to be known as the “Voting Improvement Task Force.”
The task force would consist of nine members:
(1) the Secretary of State, ex officio, or the secretary’s designee;
(2) five county election officials to be appointed, one each, by the
 Governor, Senate President, Senate Minority Leader, Speaker of the
 General Assembly, and the Assembly Minority Leader with no two
 appointees coming from the same county; and
(3) three members of the public with experience in vote-by-mail
processing or election reform advocacy to be appointed, one each, by
the Governor, Senate President, and Speaker of the General
Assembly.
The bill directs the task force to:
(1) evaluate the vote-by-mail process in the State;
(2) examine ways to process and count vote-by-mail and
provisional ballots more quickly in the State;
(3) explore the feasibility of implementing ranked-choice voting
in the State; and
(4) research additional methods of expanding and improving
voting by mail in the State.
The task force is required to hold at least three public hearings,
one each in the Northern, Central, and Southern parts of the State, to
receive testimony from the public and elections experts on matters
concerning voting by mail.
The bill directs the task force to report its findings, conclusions,
and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature no later
than one year following its first meeting. The task force would expire
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