

# SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 14

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## STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

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PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator ROBERT W. SINGER**

**District 30 (Monmouth and Ocean)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Establishes “Autism and Mental Disorders Study Commission.”

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1   **A JOINT RESOLUTION** establishing the “Autism and Mental  
2       Disorders Study Commission.”

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4       **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*  
5       *State of New Jersey:*

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7       1. There is hereby established the “Autism and Mental  
8       Disorders Study Commission.”

9       a. The commission shall consist of seven members, to be  
10      appointed as follows:

11      (1) the Commissioner of Health, or the commissioner’s  
12      designee, who shall serve ex officio;

13      (2) the Commissioner of Human Services, or the  
14      commissioner’s designee, who shall serve ex officio;

15      (1) one member to be appointed by the President of the Senate;

16      (2) one member to be appointed by the Minority Leader of the  
17      Senate;

18      (3) one member to be appointed by the Speaker of the General  
19      Assembly;

20      (4) one member to be appointed by the Minority Leader of the  
21      General Assembly; and

22      (5) one member to be appointed by the Governor.

23      b. Any vacancy in the membership of the commission shall be  
24      filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was  
25      made.

26      c. It shall be the duty of the commission to study how certain  
27      organizations, including hospitals, law enforcement agencies,  
28      prosecutors’ offices, and courts, train their employees to identify  
29      and interact with people with autism, Down syndrome, and other  
30      mental disorders.

31      d. The members of the commission shall be appointed within  
32      60 days following the date of enactment of this section. The  
33      commission shall organize as soon as practicable after the  
34      appointment of its members, and shall select a chairperson from  
35      among its membership, and a secretary who need not be a member  
36      of the commission. The presence of four members of the  
37      commission shall constitute a quorum. The commission may  
38      conduct business without a quorum, but may only vote on  
39      recommendations when a quorum is present. The commission shall  
40      be entitled to call to its assistance and avail itself of the services of  
41      the employees of any State, county, or municipal department, board,  
42      bureau, commission, authority, or agency as it may require, and as  
43      may be available to its for its purposes. Members of the  
44      commission shall serve without compensation, but shall be entitled  
45      to employ stenographic and clerical assistance and incur traveling  
46      and other miscellaneous expenses as it may deem necessary in order  
47      to perform its duties, within the limits of funds appropriated or  
48      otherwise made available to it for its purposes. The commission

1 shall meet at the call of its chairperson, at the times and in the  
2 places the chairperson may deem appropriate and necessary to  
3 effectuate the commission's duties, and it may conduct public  
4 hearings at such place or places as the chairperson shall designate.

5 e. Within one year of its organization, the commission shall  
6 issue a report of its findings and conclusions to the Governor and,  
7 pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the  
8 Legislature. The commission shall dissolve on the 30th day after  
9 the date of the issuance of its final report.

10 f. As used in this section:

11 "Autism" means any one of the several conditions classified  
12 under pervasive developmental disorder in the Diagnostic and  
13 Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, Text  
14 Revision (DSM IV-TR) or the International Classification of  
15 Diseases, Ninth Revision, Clinical Modification (ICD-9-CM),  
16 including: autistic disorder; Asperger's disorder; childhood  
17 disintegrative disorder; pervasive developmental disorder not  
18 otherwise specified, or unspecified pervasive developmental  
19 disorder; Fragile X syndrome, to the extent that the condition is  
20 comorbid with pervasive developmental disorder; Rett's disorder, to  
21 the extent that the condition is comorbid with pervasive  
22 developmental disorder; autism spectrum disorder; and any  
23 equivalent conditions as classified under any version of the  
24 Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) or  
25 the International Classification of Diseases, Clinical Modification  
26 (ICD-CM) published on or after January 1, 2000.

27 "Down syndrome" means a chromosomal disorder caused by an  
28 error in cell division that results in the presence of an extra, whole,  
29 or partial copy of chromosome 21.

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31 2. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately, and shall  
32 expire on the 30th day following the submission of the  
33 commission's report to the Governor and Legislature, as provided  
34 by subsection e. of section 1 of this joint resolution.

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#### STATEMENT

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39 This joint resolution establishes the "Autism and Mental  
40 Disorders Study Commission," to consist of seven members,  
41 including the Commissioner of Health, or the commissioner's  
42 designee; the Commissioner of Human Services, or the  
43 commissioner's designee; one member to be appointed by the  
44 President of the Senate; one member to be appointed by the  
45 Minority Leader of the Senate; one member to be appointed by the  
46 Speaker of the General Assembly; one member to be appointed by  
47 the Minority Leader of the General Assembly; and one member to  
48 be appointed by the Governor.

1       Under the resolution, the commission would study how certain  
2 organizations, including hospitals, law enforcement agencies,  
3 prosecutors' offices, and courts, train their employees to identify  
4 and interact with people with autism, Down syndrome, and other  
5 mental disorders.

6       The members of the commission are to be appointed within 60  
7 days from the enactment of the resolution, and the commission is to  
8 issue a report one year after the date of its organization. The  
9 commission would submit the report, together with any  
10 recommendations it may have for legislative or regulatory action, to  
11 the Governor and the Legislature, and would dissolve 30 days after  
12 the issuance of its final report.