

SENATE, No. 258

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Senator THOMAS H. KEAN, JR.

District 21 (Morris, Somerset and Union)

Senator BRIAN P. STACK

District 33 (Hudson)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes "Government Functions and Services Study Commission."

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **AN ACT** creating a commission to study the functions and services
2 of county government.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6
7 1. a. There is established a study commission to be known as
8 the "Government Functions and Services Study Commission," to
9 review the effectiveness of county government in providing services
10 and performing functions in relation to those provided and
11 performed by State and municipal government and to offer
12 recommendations for reassigning certain functions and services
13 from one level of government to another.

14 b. The commission shall consist of nine members. Four
15 members shall be members of the Legislature, one member shall be
16 the Commissioner of Community Affairs ex officio, or his or her
17 designee, and four members shall be members of the public to be
18 appointed by the Governor.

19 c. Two of the legislative members, who shall not be of the
20 same political party, shall be appointed by the President of the
21 Senate, and two of the legislative members, who shall not be of the
22 same political party, shall be appointed by the Speaker of the
23 General Assembly. One of the members named by the President of
24 the Senate shall be a nominee of the Minority Leader of the Senate.
25 One of the members named by the Speaker of the General
26 Assembly shall be a nominee of the Minority Leader of the General
27 Assembly. The members appointed from the Senate and the
28 General Assembly shall serve during the two-year legislative
29 session in which the appointment is made.

30 d. Of the four public members to be appointed by the
31 Governor, one shall be a nominee of the New Jersey Association of
32 Counties, one shall be a nominee of the New Jersey State League of
33 Municipalities and two shall be named by the Governor from
34 among the citizens of the State, however, no more than two of the
35 four public members shall be members of the same political party.
36 The Governor shall name members to the commission within 60
37 days of the effective date of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before
38 the Legislature as this bill).

39 e. The Governor shall appoint a chairperson from among the
40 public members of the commission. The members of the
41 commission shall appoint a secretary who need not be a member of
42 the commission. Vacancies in the membership shall be filled in the
43 same manner as the original appointments were made. The
44 members shall serve without remuneration, but shall be eligible for
45 reimbursement for necessary and reasonable expenses incurred in
46 the performance of their official duties, within the limits of funds
47 made available to the commission for its purposes.

1 2. The commission shall meet as soon as practicable after the
2 appointment of a majority of its members. The commission may
3 meet and hold hearings at any place or places it shall designate
4 during the sessions or recesses of the Legislature. The commission
5 shall hold at least three public hearings and shall elicit the
6 participation of the general public as well as experts on State,
7 county and municipal government.

8
9 3. The Executive Director of the Office of Legislative Services
10 shall provide such technical, stenographic and secretarial assistance
11 as may be required by the commission. The commission may also
12 request the assistance and services of the employees of any other
13 State, county or municipal department, board, bureau, commission,
14 task force, or agency as it may require and as may be available to it
15 for its purposes, and incur travel and other miscellaneous expenses
16 necessary to perform its duties, within the limits of funds made
17 available to it for its purposes.

18
19 4. It shall be the duty of the study commission to review the
20 laws and regulations governing the functions of county government
21 and services provided by county government to the people of this
22 State, and to make recommendations as to whether those functions
23 and services are currently being performed in the most effective and
24 economical manner. The commission shall also determine whether
25 those functions and services can be performed more efficiently and
26 effectively by State or municipal government and whether any
27 functions and services now being provided by State or municipal
28 government may be more efficiently and effectively performed by
29 county government. If so, the study commission shall recommend
30 to the Governor and the Legislature a plan for the reassignment of
31 those functions and services that it deems better provided by a
32 different level of government to the appropriate governmental
33 entity.

34 The commission shall report its findings to the Governor and to
35 the Legislature upon completion of its work, but not later than 12
36 months after the initial appointment of a majority of its members.
37 The commission shall accompany the report with any
38 recommendations for legislation which it may have concerning the
39 effectiveness of county government.

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41 5. The commission shall expire upon the issuance of its final
42 report and recommendations to the Governor and to the Legislature.

43
44 6. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill would establish the "Government Functions and Services Study Commission," to review the effectiveness of county government in providing services and performing functions in relation to those provided and performed by State and municipal government and to offer recommendations for reassigning certain functions and services from one level of government to another.

The bill would require the commission to review the laws and regulations governing the functions of, and services provided by, county government and to determine whether those functions and services are being performed effectively and economically. The bill would also require the commission to determine whether those functions and services could be performed more efficiently and effectively by State or municipal government and whether any functions and services now being provided by State or municipal government may be more efficiently and effectively performed by county government. If so, the study commission would recommend to the Governor and the Legislature a plan for the reassignment of those functions and services that it deems better provided by a different level of government to the appropriate governmental entity.

The commission would consist of nine members: four members of the Legislature, four public members to be appointed by the Governor, and the Commissioner of Community Affairs, ex officio, or his or her designee. Two of the legislative members would be Senators who would be appointed by the Senate President, one of whom would be a nominee of the Senate Minority Leader. The other two legislative members would be members of the General Assembly who would be appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, one of whom would be a nominee of the Assembly Minority Leader.

Of the four gubernatorial appointees, one would be a nominee of the New Jersey Association of Counties, one would be a nominee of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities and two would be citizens of the State. No more than two of the four public members could be members of the same political party. The Governor would be required to name members to the commission within 60 days of the bill's effective date. The Governor would appoint a chairperson of the commission from among the public members. The commission would be required to report its findings to the Governor and to the Legislature not later than 12 months after the initial appointment of a majority of its members.