

ASSEMBLY, No. 2965

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED MAY 12, 1997

By Assemblymen MORAN and CONNORS

1 AN ACT establishing a Public School Educational Funding  
2 Commission.

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

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7 1. There is created a commission to be known as the "Public  
8 School Educational Funding Commission." The commission shall  
9 consist of nine members as follows: two members to be appointed by  
10 the President of the Senate, which members shall not be of the same  
11 political party; two members to be appointed by the Speaker of the  
12 General Assembly, which members shall not be of the same political  
13 party; four public members with knowledge and experience in the area  
14 of public and school finance to be appointed by the Governor, no more  
15 than two of whom shall be of the same political party; and the  
16 Commissioner of Education.

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18 2. All appointments shall be made within 30 days after the  
19 operative date of this act. Vacancies in the membership of the  
20 commission shall be filled in the same manner as the original  
21 appointments were made. Members of the commission shall serve  
22 without compensation.

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24 3. The commission shall organize within 30 days after the  
25 appointment of its members and shall select a chairperson and a vice  
26 chairperson from among its members and a secretary who need not be  
27 a member of the commission.

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29 4. It shall be the duty of the commission to study the issues  
30 associated with the funding of the public schools and to devise two  
31 alternative State revenue raising plans to fund the core curriculum  
32 content standards adopted by the State Board of Education in May of  
33 1996. The State revenue raising plans shall provide for adequate funds  
34 to offset any loss of revenue due to the reduction in local real property  
35 taxes approved by the voters at the 1997 general election pursuant to  
36 the constitutional amendment set forth in SCR of 1997. The plans  
37 shall not recommend the use of revenue sources that would result in

1 a reduction in the level of aid appropriated to municipalities, school  
2 districts, and counties and the level of aid appropriated for programs  
3 that provide a direct benefit to individuals, below the total levels of aid  
4 appropriated therefore in the annual appropriations act for the fiscal  
5 year in which SCR of 1997 is adopted.

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7 5. The commission shall be entitled to call to its assistance and  
8 avail itself of the services of the employees of any State, county or  
9 municipal department, board, bureau, commission or agency as it may  
10 require and as may be available to it for its purposes.

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12 6. The commission may meet and hold hearings at the place or  
13 places it designates during the sessions or recesses of the Legislature.  
14 The commission shall issue a final report containing the two alternative  
15 funding plans to the Governor and the Legislature no later than six  
16 months following its organizational meeting.

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18 7. This act shall take effect immediately and shall become operative  
19 upon the voters approval of ACR of 1997.

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22 STATEMENT

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24 This bill creates a commission to be known as the "Public School  
25 Educational Funding Commission." The commission would consist of  
26 nine members selected as follows: two members to be appointed by  
27 the President of the Senate, which members shall not be of the same  
28 political party; two members to be appointed by the Speaker of the  
29 General Assembly, which members shall not be of the same political  
30 party; four public members with knowledge and experience in the area  
31 of public and school finance to be appointed by the Governor, no more  
32 than two of whom shall be members of the same political party; and  
33 the Commissioner of Education.

34 It is the duty of the commission to study the issues associated with  
35 the funding of education and to propose two alternative State revenue  
36 raising plans to fund the core curriculum content standards. The State  
37 revenue raising plans must provide for adequate funds to offset any  
38 loss of revenue due to the reduction in local real property taxes  
39 approved by the voters at the 1997 general election pursuant to the  
40 constitutional amendment set forth in ACR of 1997. The plans may  
41 not use sources of revenue already appropriated for aid programs.

42 The commission is required to issue a final report containing the  
43 two State revenue raising plans, to the Governor and the Legislature  
44 no later than six months following its organizational meeting.

45 This bill is a companion to ACR of 1997 which proposes a  
46 constitutional amendment that provides that for the 2000-2001 school

1 year and thereafter local real property taxes cannot be used to fund the  
2 core curriculum content standards. The State would be responsible for  
3 funding the core curriculum content standards with State revenues.  
4 Under the constitutional amendment the "Public School Educational  
5 Funding Commission" would propose two State revenue raising plans  
6 to fund the core curriculum content standards and the Legislature  
7 would be required to enact one of the plans, or any combination of the  
8 two plans. If the Legislature failed to enact one of the plans, or any  
9 combination of the two plans, then the two plans would be placed on  
10 the ballot at the next general election and the plan with the greatest  
11 number of affirmative votes would be the method by which State  
12 revenues would be raised to fund the core curriculum content  
13 standards. The Legislature would be permitted to enact changes to the  
14 method of funding the core curriculum content standards, but a  
15 reduction in the total funding for the standards would have to be  
16 approved by the voters of the State.

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21 Establishes the Public School Educational Funding Commission.