

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION No. 18

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 22, 1996

**By Senators LYNCH, LITTELL, Casey, Kenny, Lipman and
LaRossa**

1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** to create a Federal Block Grant Advisory
2 Commission.

3

4 **WHEREAS**, The negotiations between President Clinton and Congress
5 on a plan that would balance the federal budget in seven years and
6 restructure many programs such as Medicaid, Medicare and
7 welfare, may result in the transformation of existing categorical
8 federal programs into block grants for the states; and

9 **WHEREAS**, For example, the federal Medicaid program may be
10 transformed into a block grant called Medigrant, and the federal
11 Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program may be
12 transformed into a block grant called Temporary Assistance to
13 Needy Families; and

14 **WHEREAS**, While block grant programs do reduce the fragmentation
15 and duplication of the multitude of categorical programs on the
16 federal level, such programs generally also transfer considerable
17 authority to the states to decide which specific services to provide
18 within the broad goals of the grant programs, and offer state
19 governments the chance to structure programs so that they meet the
20 specific needs of their residents; and

21 **WHEREAS**, Block grants may be used to achieve a variety of goals,
22 including administrative cost savings, decentralized decision
23 making, enhanced coordination, flexibility for innovation and
24 targeted funding; and

25 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey must begin to assess the impact block grants
26 will have on the State government and the residents of the State,
27 the changes that will be needed to reformat current programs to
28 achieve national as well as State objectives, the transition schedule
29 to block grant funding, the resources needed to offset federal
30 funding reductions in the coming years, and the monitoring and
31 auditing that will be required to ensure accountability to the federal
32 government for the expenditure of block grant funds; now,
33 therefore,

34

35 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
36 *of New Jersey:*

1 1. a. There is hereby established a commission to be known as the
2 Federal Block Grant Advisory Commission.

3 b. The commission shall consist of thirteen members to be
4 appointed as follows: two members of the Senate appointed by the
5 President of the Senate, no more than one of whom shall be a member
6 of the same political party; two members of the General Assembly
7 appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, no more than one
8 of whom shall be a member of the same political party; one member
9 who is a full-time employee of the Executive Branch to be appointed
10 by the Governor; the Commissioner of the Department of Human
11 Services, ex officio, or a designated representative; the President of
12 the New Jersey League of Municipalities, or a designated
13 representative; the President of the New Jersey Association of
14 Counties, or a designated representative; two members who are
15 members of the Congressional delegation from this State, appointed
16 by the Governor; and three members of the general public appointed
17 by the Governor, no more than two of whom shall be members of the
18 same political party.

19 The members of the commission shall serve without compensation,
20 but shall be reimbursed for necessary and reasonable expenses actually
21 incurred in the performance of their duties, within the limits of funds
22 appropriated or otherwise made available to the commission for this
23 purpose.

24 Vacancies in the membership of the commission shall be filled in the
25 same manner as the original appointments.

26 c. The commission shall organize within 30 days after the
27 appointment of the majority of its authorized membership and shall
28 select a chairperson and vice-chairperson from among the members.
29 The chairperson shall appoint an executive secretary who need not be
30 a member of the commission.

31 The commission may meet and hold hearings at such places as it
32 shall designate during the sessions and recesses of the Legislature.

33 The commission shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail
34 itself of the services of the employees of any State, county, or
35 municipal department, board, bureau, commission or agency, as it may
36 require and as may be available to it for its purposes.

37 The commission shall further be entitled to use the services of the
38 employees and resources of the Office of Legislative Services for
39 administrative, stenographic or clerical assistance. It may incur
40 traveling and other miscellaneous expenses as it may deem necessary
41 to perform its duties, within the limits of funds appropriated or
42 otherwise made available to the commission for this purpose.

43

44 2. a. The commission shall monitor the creation of federal block
45 grant programs; analyze the impact that such programs will have on
46 the State of New Jersey; offer procedures for the smooth transition

1 from categorical federal aid to block grants; provide guidelines for the
2 restructuring of programs to achieve maximum State flexibility within
3 the goals of the grant programs; provide guidance to the Legislature
4 and Governor in the management, implementation and assessment of
5 block grants programs; and recommend legislation in this area for
6 enactment that it deems appropriate or necessary.

7 b. The commission shall report to the Legislature and the Governor
8 as frequently as it deems necessary, but at least semi-annually
9 concerning its deliberations and recommendations. The commission
10 shall include in its reports recommendations for legislation it deems
11 appropriate or necessary.

12

13 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately and expire on
14 December 31, 1997.

15

16

17

STATEMENT

18

19 This joint resolution creates the Federal Block Grant Advisory
20 Commission. This thirteen member commission is charged with the
21 duty to monitor the creation of block grant programs by the federal
22 government and to advise, through periodic reports, the Legislature
23 and the Governor on the State's transition to block grant programs.

24 The commission will expire on December 31, 1997.

25

26

27

28

29 _____
Creates Federal Block Grant Advisory Commission.