

[First Reprint]

**SENATE, No. 3164**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**219th LEGISLATURE**

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INTRODUCED NOVEMBER 9, 2020

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator VIN GOPAL**

**District 11 (Monmouth)**

**Senator TROY SINGLETON**

**District 7 (Burlington)**

**Assemblyman ERIC HOUGHTALING**

**District 11 (Monmouth)**

**Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE**

**District 37 (Bergen)**

**Assemblyman THOMAS P. GIBLIN**

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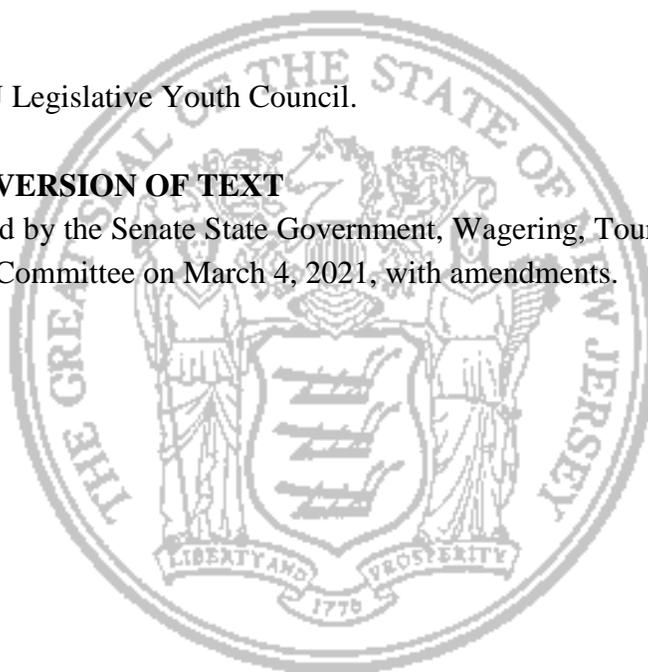
**Senators Diegnan, Pou, Ruiz, Assemblymen Coughlin, Moen and Zwicker**

**SYNOPSIS**

Creates NJ Legislative Youth Council.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As reported by the Senate State Government, Wagering, Tourism & Historic Preservation Committee on March 4, 2021, with amendments.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/10/2022)**

1 AN ACT creating the New Jersey Legislative Youth Council and  
2 supplementing Title 52 of the Revised Statutes.

3

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

6

7 1. This act shall be known, and may be cited as, the New Jersey  
8 Legislative Youth Council Act.

9

10 2. The Legislature finds and declares that:

11 a. Engagement and participation by our youth in civic life are  
12 essential to maintaining the strength of our democracy, but the  
13 youth of the United States may not believe that they have a  
14 substantive voice in their government or the opportunities to share  
15 their perspectives and opinions at the highest levels of our  
16 government.

17 b. The unique perspectives and valuable insights of the youth  
18 of this country are essential to ensuring that investments made by  
19 the government for programs and services for those youth are  
20 effective and efficient.

21 c. Many state legislatures have created youth councils that  
22 have proven to be an effective means of understanding the  
23 perspectives and opinions of the youth of the state, leading to more  
24 effective and efficient policies, programs, and services for those  
25 youth.

26 d. The creation of a youth council in this State that can advise  
27 the New Jersey Legislature will be beneficial for the State and its  
28 resident youth.

29

30 3. There is established a New Jersey Legislative Youth Council  
31 for the purpose of providing a forum for the youth of this State to  
32 participate in the democratic process; to advise the Legislature and  
33 its committees, commissions, and task forces on the perspectives,  
34 opinions, needs, development, and welfare of the youth of the State;  
35 and to advise the Legislature and its committees, commissions and  
36 task forces on the most effective and efficient policies, programs,  
37 and services that the State could provide for the youth of this State.  
38 The council shall research, analyze, discuss, and make specific  
39 recommendations in the areas of civics education; drugs and  
40 substance abuse; emotional and physical health; employment and  
41 economic opportunities; environmental protection; gun violence and  
42 school safety; homelessness and poverty; mental health; safe  
43 environment for youth; sexual harassment and violence; youth  
44 services; and youth bias and hate crimes.

**EXPLANATION** – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

<sup>1</sup>Senate SSG committee amendments adopted March 4, 2021.

1 In each two-year term of the New Jersey Legislature, the council  
2 shall submit, in writing, a series of policy recommendations to the  
3 President of the Senate, the Speaker of the General Assembly, the  
4 Minority Leader of the Senate, and the Minority Leader of the  
5 General Assembly. The series of policy recommendations shall be  
6 made available online to the public.

7 The council may express its position publicly on legislation  
8 pending before the New Jersey Legislature that is directly relevant  
9 to the youth of this State.

10

11 4. a. The council shall be comprised of 44 members. Forty  
12 members shall be members of the public and four members shall be  
13 members of the New Jersey Legislature.

14 b. Each of the 40 public members shall have been a resident of  
15 New Jersey for at least 15 years and shall be between 15 and 23  
16 years of age at the time of appointment.

17 Each public member shall represent one of the 40 districts of the  
18 New Jersey Legislature.

19 The 40 public members shall be inclusive and reflective of the  
20 racial, gender, geographic, urban, rural, and economic diversity of  
21 their district.

22 A public member who is less than 18 years of age shall be  
23 required to provide written permission from a parent or legal  
24 guardian to be a member of the council and participate in its  
25 activities. Any public member who is less than 18 years of age  
26 shall be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian, or an adult  
27 designated in writing by the parent or legal guardian, at all times  
28 when attending meetings and other activities of the council.

29 No public member shall be a family member, or an employee, of  
30 a person who is holding, or who held in the five years prior to the  
31 public member's appointment, any appointive or elective public  
32 office of this State.

33 Public members shall serve for a term of two years, and if  
34 eligible, may be reappointed to serve for one additional term.

35 c. The President of the Senate shall appoint one member of the  
36 Senate to serve on the council. The Speaker of the General  
37 Assembly shall appoint one member of the General Assembly to  
38 serve on the council. The Minority Leader of the Senate shall  
39 appoint one member of the Senate to serve on the council. The  
40 Minority Leader of the General Assembly shall appoint one member  
41 of the General Assembly to serve on the council.

42 The legislative members shall serve a term coterminous with  
43 their term of office, and at the pleasure of the President of the  
44 Senate or the Speaker of the General Assembly.

45 The legislative members shall be non-voting, advisory members  
46 appointed solely for the purpose of assisting the public members of  
47 the council in conducting the council's meetings and activities, and  
48 in fulfilling the council's purpose.

1 The legislative members shall advise the council on the  
2 legislative process, provide policy and fiscal briefings, assist with  
3 the drafting of proposed legislation, and provide such guidance and  
4 information as the council deems appropriate.

5 d. The public members of the council shall serve until their  
6 successors are appointed and qualified, and, for this purpose, a  
7 public member may serve after reaching the age of 23 years. The  
8 term of the successor of any incumbent public member shall be  
9 calculated from the expiration of the term of that incumbent public  
10 member. A vacancy occurring other than by expiration of term  
11 shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment but  
12 for the unexpired term only.

13 e. For the purpose of the New Jersey Legislative Youth  
14 Council:

15 “Appointive or elective public office” means an appointment by  
16 the Governor that requires the advice and consent of the Senate, or  
17 an appointment by the Governor to serve at the pleasure of the  
18 Governor only during his or her term of office, an appointment by  
19 an elected public official or elected governing body of a political  
20 subdivision of the State, that requires the specific consent or  
21 approval of the elected governing body of the political subdivision,  
22 or any office filled at an election by the voters at a general election.

23 “Family member” means a child, sibling, niece, nephew, first  
24 cousin, or grandchild, whether the individual is related by blood,  
25 marriage, or adoption.

26 “Youth” means a person at least 15 years of age but under the  
27 age of 23 years.

28

29 5. The legislative members shall be appointed within 60 days  
30 after the creation of the council by law. The legislative members  
31 initially appointed shall develop an application form and application  
32 process for the selection of the public members. The application  
33 form and application process may be revised by a majority vote of  
34 the public members appointed to the council.

35 The member of the Senate and the two members of the General  
36 Assembly who represent each district of the New Jersey Legislature  
37 shall appoint one person, based on the application submitted by that  
38 person, to serve as a public member of the council from among the  
39 persons residing in that legislative district who submit applications.  
40 The public members shall be appointed within 60 days of the  
41 completion of the application form and application process.

42 If no applications for public membership are received from  
43 persons in a legislative district or there are no qualified applicants,  
44 an additional 30 days to appoint a public member from that  
45 legislative district shall be provided for the receipt of applications  
46 from person who reside in that legislative district.

1       6. a. The legislative members of the council appointed by the  
2 President of the Senate and the Speaker of the General Assembly  
3 shall serve as co-chairs at the initial meeting of the council. At the  
4 same initial meeting, the public members shall elect five of the  
5 public members of the council to service on the council's executive  
6 board.

7       b. The executive board shall be comprised of five public  
8 members and the four legislative members. The five public  
9 members of the executive board shall be elected by a majority vote  
10 of the public members of the council. Executive board members  
11 shall be elected to serve for two years and shall not be eligible to be  
12 elected to serve on the executive board for any additional term. The  
13 members of the executive board shall include a chair, vice chair,  
14 secretary, and any other officer the council deems necessary and  
15 appropriate.

16  
17       7. a. The council shall meet at least four times a year to  
18 conduct business. The council shall meet at the State House  
19 Complex to conduct business.

20       b. A majority of the public members shall constitute a quorum  
21 for the transaction of business, and the acts of a majority of the  
22 public members present at a meeting at which there is a quorum  
23 shall constitute the acts of the council.

24       The council shall hold at least two public hearings each year, in  
25 different parts of the State, for the purpose of receiving testimony  
26 from members of the public, and in particular from the youth of this  
27 State.

28       The council may hold such other meetings throughout the year as  
29 the council may deem appropriate.

30       c. The council shall submit an annual report by January 15 of  
31 each year to the Legislature of its activities and recommendations.  
32 The report shall be made available online to the public.

33       d. The council shall be constituted upon the appointment of the  
34 majority of its public members and shall have no expiration date.

35  
36       8. a. The public members of the council shall serve without  
37 compensation, but may be reimbursed for necessary expenses  
38 incurred in the performance of their duties as public members of the  
39 council, within the limits of funds made available to the council for  
40 its purpose.

41       b. The New Jersey Legislature may accept monetary donations,  
42 that shall be deposited into the New Jersey Legislative Youth  
43 Council Fund, from public and private sources to support the  
44 activities of the council. A monetary donation shall not be accepted  
45 from any person or entity with a pecuniary or other vested interest  
46 in the outcome of the work of the council or when the donation  
47 would in any way compromise the work of the council. A person or  
48 entity who desires to make a monetary donation shall certify to the

1 council or its designee, in the manner prescribed by the council, that  
2 the person or entity has no pecuniary or other vested interest in the  
3 outcome of the work of the council. Donations by a person or  
4 entity shall not exceed \$500 'per calendar year' in the aggregate.  
5 Each donation shall be subject to approval by the council.

6  
7 9. The Department of the Treasury shall establish and maintain  
8 a special revolving fund to be known as the New Jersey Legislative  
9 Youth Council Fund. The fund shall be maintained as a separate  
10 account and administered by the Department of the Treasury to  
11 support the New Jersey Legislative Youth Council.

12 The State Treasurer shall administer the fund, which shall be  
13 credited with donations received by the New Jersey Legislature for  
14 the council, moneys that the Legislature may appropriate, and other  
15 moneys made available including, but not limited to, funds provided  
16 by the federal government.

17  
18 10. This act shall take effect immediately.