

SENATE, No. 3966

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 16, 2021

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes NJ Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Life Long Skills Commission in the Department of State.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT establishing the New Jersey Supporting Knowledge and
2 Investing in Life Long Skills Commission in the Department of
3 State and supplementing P.L.1948, c.445 (C.52:16A-1 et seq.).
4

5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*
7

8 1. a. There is established, in the Department of State, the New
9 Jersey Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Life Long Skills
10 (NJSKILLS) Commission. The purpose of the commission shall be
11 to evaluate changes in labor market needs in the State, and advise
12 State agencies of those developments that are pertinent to the
13 agencies' responsibilities. The commission shall consist of 21
14 members as follows:

15 (1) the Commissioner of Education, the Secretary of Higher
16 Education, and the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce
17 Development, and the Chief Executive Officers of the New Jersey
18 Economic Development Authority and the Schools Development
19 Authority or their designees; and

20 (2) 14 members appointed by the Governor, including:

21 (a) one representative each of a four-year public institution of
22 higher education, a four-year independent institution of higher
23 education, and a county college;

24 (b) six representatives of school districts with expertise in
25 curriculum development, including two urban, two rural, and two
26 suburban school districts, all of which have below average
27 graduation rates and are in municipalities with above average
28 unemployment rates;

29 (c) one individual with expertise in labor economics;

30 (d) one representative from a trade association;

31 (e) one representative from the business community;

32 (e) one representative of the New Jersey Council of Vocational
33 Technical Schools; and

34 (f) one representative of a group with above average rates of
35 unemployment and underemployment; and

36 (3) two individuals with experience in education and economic
37 development, one appointed by the President of the Senate and one
38 appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly.

39 b. Appointments to the commission shall be made within 30
40 days after the effective date of this act. The terms of the members
41 appointed by the Governor shall be for five years or until their
42 successors are appointed and qualified, except that of the initial
43 appointments made to the commission, five shall serve for a term of
44 three years, five shall serve for a term of four years, and four shall
45 serve for a term of five years. The terms of the members appointed
46 by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the General
47 Assembly shall be for five years or until their successors are

1 appointed and qualified. Any vacancy shall be filled in the same
2 manner as the original appointment but only for the balance of the
3 unexpired term.

4 Members of the commission shall serve without compensation,
5 but shall be reimbursed for necessary expenditures incurred in the
6 performance of their duties as members of the commission within
7 the limits of funds made available to the commission for its
8 purposes.

9 c. The Chief Executive Officer of the New Jersey Economic
10 Development Authority shall serve as the chairperson of the board.
11

12 2. The responsibilities of the commission shall include, but not
13 be limited to, the following:

14 a. to produce an annual report providing data on trends in
15 employment, including which occupations and which economic
16 sectors have, or are expected to have, growing demand for qualified
17 workers in the State, the associated needs for training and education
18 to provide the numbers of qualified workers required in each of
19 those occupations and sectors, the capacity of institutions of higher
20 education and other post-secondary occupational training programs,
21 including apprenticeship programs, to meet those needs, with
22 recommendations regarding any needed allocation of resources
23 needed to ensure that those needs are met;

24 b. to provide, in its annual report, recommendations to the State
25 Board of Education during the review and update of the core
26 curriculum content standards conducted by the State board pursuant
27 to section 4 of P.L.2007, c.260 (C.18A:7F-46);

28 c. to advise the Department of Labor and Workforce
29 Development and the State Employment and Training Commission
30 of occupational areas in which there are unmet training needs;

31 d. to assist institutions of higher education in aligning course
32 offerings and content with labor market needs; and

33 e. to oversee, and make recommendations in its annual report
34 regarding, the activities of the Center for Occupational Employment
35 Information in carrying out its responsibilities as required by
36 section 27 of P.L.2005, c.354 (C.34:1A-86), including the
37 compilation of information from approved training providers as
38 required pursuant to subsection f. of that section to produce a
39 consumer report card on each qualified school or other approved
40 training provider, and the implementation and enforcement,
41 pursuant to subsection g. of that section, of a process to revoke or
42 suspend from the State Eligible Training Provider List any of the
43 schools or providers which fail to submit the required data.
44

45 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill establishes, in the Department of State, the New Jersey Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Life Long Skills (NJSKILLS) Commission. The purpose of the commission will be to evaluate changes in labor market needs in the State and to advise State agencies of developments that are pertinent to the agencies' responsibilities.

The commission will include 21 members, including the Commissioner of Education, the Secretary of Higher Education, and the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development, and the Chief Executive Officers of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority and the Schools Development Authority or their designee, two individuals with experience in education and economic development, one appointed by the President of the Senate and one appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, and 14 members appointed by the Governor, including:

1. one representative each of a four-year public institution of higher education, a four-year independent institution of higher education, and a county college;

2. six representatives of school districts with expertise in curriculum development, including two urban, two rural, and two suburban school districts, all of which have below average graduation rates and are in municipalities with above average unemployment rates;

3. one individual with expertise in labor economics;

4. one representative from trade associations;

5. one representative from the business community;

6. one representative of the New Jersey Council of Vocational Technical Schools; and

7. one representative of a group with above average rates of unemployment and underemployment.

The appointed members would each serve a term of five years, except five of the initial appointees will serve a three-year term, five will serve a four-year term, and four will serve a five-year term. The Chief Executive Officer of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority is to serve as the chairperson of the board.

The commission would produce an annual report providing data on trends in employment and make recommendations to the appropriate State agencies on matters including: the update and review of the core curriculum content standards; occupational areas in which there are unmet training needs; the alignment of higher education course offerings and content to labor market needs. The commission would also oversee, and make recommendations in its annual report regarding, the activities of the Center for Occupational Employment Information in carrying out its responsibilities, including the compilation of information from

1 approved training providers as required to produce a consumer
2 report card on each qualified school or other approved training
3 provider, and the implementation and enforcement of a process to
4 revoke or suspend from the State Eligible Training Provider List
5 any of the schools or providers which fail to submit the required
6 data.