ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION No. 189

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 14, 2019

Sponsored by:

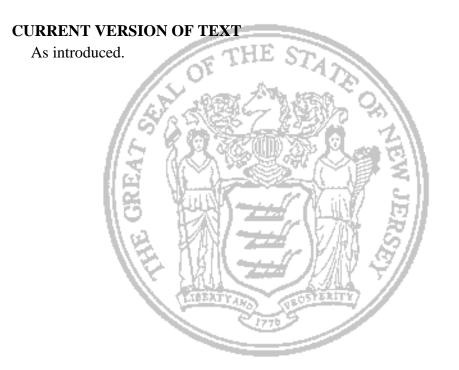
Assemblyman ANTHONY S. VERRELLI
District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)
Assemblywoman VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON
District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)
Assemblywoman SHAVONDA E. SUMTER
District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywomen Carter, McKnight and Speight

SYNOPSIS

Establishes the "New Jersey State Commission on Urban Violence."



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/10/2020)

1	A JOINT RESOLUTION creating a commission to study the sources
2	and causes of violence in urban New Jersey.
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4	WHEREAS, New Jersey's urban municipalities are being ravaged by an
5	unprecedented wave of violence; and
6	WHEREAS, Families and communities are being spiritually and
7	psychologically devastated and crushed by the horrors of this
8	violence; and
9	WHEREAS, Children, friends, and neighbors are being injured,
10	maimed, and killed by seemingly senseless, meaningless, and
11	inexplicable acts of violence; and
12	WHEREAS, The victims, their families, their friends, their neighbors,
13	their communities, and all the citizens of goodwill in this State cry
14	out for assistance; and
15	WHEREAS, The tragedy, pain, anxiety, and fear associated with this
16	violence cannot be permitted to continue; and
17	WHEREAS, The families and residents of New Jersey's urban
18	municipalities deserve and are entitled to safe, secure, and
19	peaceable communities and neighborhoods; and
20	WHEREAS, It is, therefore, altogether fitting and proper, and within the
21	public interest, to establish a commission to study the sources and
22	causes of the violence that is plaguing our urban communities and
23	to make recommendations to address and alleviate those sources
24	and causes so as to ensure the safety and well-being not only of the
25	children, families, and residents of this State's urban municipalities,
26	but of all the citizens of New Jersey; now, therefore,
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28	BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate and General Assembly of the
29	State of New Jersey:
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31	1. a. There is established the "New Jersey State Commission on
32	Urban Violence" to study the sources and causes of violence in urban
33	New Jersey.
34	The commission shall consist of 44 members, all ex officio, or
35	their designees: the Governor's Chief of Staff; the Attorney General;
36	the President of the New Jersey State Conference of the National
37	Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); the
38	Chairperson of the New Jersey Black Issues Convention; the Public
39	Defender; the Prosecutors of the counties of Camden, Essex, Hudson,
40	Mercer, Middlesex, Passaic, and Union; the Chairperson of the New
41	Jersey Legislative Black Caucus; the Chairperson of the New Jersey
42	Legislative Latino Caucus; the President of the Hispanic Bar
43	Association of New Jersey; the President of the Latino Action
44	Network; the Chair of the Commission on Hispanic/Latino Ministry;
45	the President of the Latino Institute; the President of the Latino
46	Leadership Alliance of New Jersey; the Chairperson of the New Jersey
47	chapter of the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials; the

President of the New Jersey Education Association; the Administrative

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- 1 Director of the Courts; the Superintendent of State Police; the chief
- 2 law enforcement officers of the five urban municipalities with the
- 3 highest violent crime rate, as set forth in the most recent Uniform
- 4 Crime Report submitted by the Attorney General to the Governor and
- 5 the Legislature; the mayors of the five urban municipalities with the
- highest violent crime rate, as set forth in the most recent Uniform 6
- 7 Crime Report submitted by the Attorney General to the Governor and
- 8 the Legislature; the Commissioner of Community Affairs; the
- 9 Commissioner of Human Services; the Commissioner of Corrections;
- 10 the Chairperson of the Department of African American and African 11
- Studies, Rutgers, the State University, Newark; the Director of the
- 12 Center for State Constitutional Studies, Rutgers, the State University,
- 13 Camden; the Dean of the Rutgers School of Criminal Justice, Rutgers, 14 the State University, Newark; the President of the New Jersey State
- 15 AFL-CIO; the President of the New Jersey Black Baptist Convention;
- 16 the President of the Newark North Jersey Committee of Black
- 17 Churchmen; the President of the Garden State Bar Association; and the
- 18 President of the Association of Black Women Lawyers of New Jersey. 19

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

Eleven members of the commission shall constitute a quorum to transact its business.

b. The members shall hold their initial organizational meeting as soon as practicable, but no later than 45 days following the effective date of this resolution.

The members shall select a chairperson from among the members. The chairperson shall appoint a secretary who need not be a member of the commission.

- c. Members of the commission shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as members of the commission, and within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the commission for its purpose.
- d. The commission shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail itself of the services of the employees of any State, county, or municipal department, board, bureau, commission, or agency as it may require and as may be available to it for its purposes.

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2. It shall be the duty of the commission to study the sources and causes of violence in urban New Jersey; to assess the invasive impact this violence is having on individuals, families, and communities, and in particular on the spirit, hopes, and dreams of urban young people, their parents, and family members; and to recommend actions to address and alleviate the sources and causes of this epidemic of violence so as to ensure the safety, security, and well-being of all the residents of New Jersey's urban communities.

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3. The commission may meet and hold hearings at the places it designates throughout the State and at the times it so determines appropriate for its purposes.

4. The commission shall submit two interim reports, the first one six months following its organization pursuant to subsection b. of section 1 of this resolution and the second, 12 months following its organization.

The commission shall submit its final report and any recommendations it may have to the Governor and the Legislature no later than 18 months following its organization pursuant to subsection b. of section 1 of this resolution.

The final report shall be submitted in accordance with the provisions of section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1).

The commission shall expire upon the submission of its final report.

5. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately and shall expire upon the commission's submission of its final report and its recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature.

STATEMENT

 This joint resolution establishes the "New Jersey State Commission on Urban Violence" to study the sources and causes of violence in urban New Jersey.

The commission is to consist of 44 members, representing a broad spectrum of State and local officers and officials, law enforcement, professional organizations, academics, labor, and faith-based and church - centered associations. The members serve ex officio.

The joint resolution directs the commission to file two interim reports with the Governor and the Legislature to detail its progress. The first interim report is to be issued six months after the commission's organization; the second interim report is to be issued 12 months after its organization.

The commission has 18 months from its organization to complete its study and file its final report. The report is to include any recommendations it might have concerning ways to address and alleviate the sources and causes of urban violence so as to ensure the safety, security, and well-being of the children and families living in those communities.

According to the sponsor, New Jersey's urban communities are being ravaged by an unprecedented wave of violence. Children, friends, and neighbors are being injured and killed by seemingly senseless, meaningless, and inexplicable acts of violence. The tragedy, pain, and fear resulting from this violence must be stopped.

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The families and residents of New Jersey's urban areas deserve and 2 are entitled to safe, secure, and peaceable neighborhoods. The 3 purpose of this commission is to seek ways to address and alleviate 4 the sources and causes of this urban violence. 5 On July 28, 1967, President Lyndon Johnson established "The 6 National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders" to study the 7 sources and causes of the violence and disorder that ravaged many 8 of America's cities, including Newark. Popularly known as the 9 "Kerner Commission," the commission completed a comprehensive and thorough study of the factors that led to the violence, and 10 submitted wide-ranging and insightful recommendations to address 11 the myriad problems they discovered. 12 The sponsor envisions the study and the recommendations of the 13 14 "New Jersey State Commission on Urban Violence" as having a powerful impact, comparable to that of the "Kerner Commission," 15 enabling New Jersey to begin to fully and successfully address the 16 sources and causes of urban violence. 17