STATE OF NEW YORK

4519

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

February 4, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. FALL -- read once and referred to the Committee on Tourism, Parks, Arts and Sports Development

AN ACT to direct the department of economic development to conduct a study regarding increasing public access to museums in New York city

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Study. a. The department of economic development, in conjunction with the empire state development corporation, the department of education, the office of parks, recreation and historic preservation, the department of environmental conservation, the department of state, the New York city department of cultural affairs, the New York city parks department, and the New York state council on the arts, is hereby directed to conduct a comprehensive study on increasing public access to museums in New York city.

b. The museums that shall be identified in such study operate as and shall include, but not be limited to the American Museum of Natural History, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn Children's Museum, Brooklyn Museum, Museum of the City of New York, New York Botanical Garden, New York Hall of Science, Staten Island Museum, Staten Island Zoo, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Wave Hill, Bronx Zoo, Central Park Zoo, New York Aquarium, Prospect Park Zoo, and Queens Florham Park Zoo.

§ 2. Scope. The study shall focus on current barriers to public access, historical access by the public, laws governing free public access, the financial and operational impact of increasing public access, financial support received by museums from governmental and other entities, and changes in such financial support since the creation of these museums. To that end, the topics to be studied shall include, but not be limited to:

a. the financial status of such museums, including assets, sources of income, endowment portfolios, and expenses;

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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b. current policies and practices of such museums regarding public access, with a focus on laws regarding free access and admission;

c. historic and current mission, purpose, and operations of such museums;

d. enabling legislation and other statutory requirements regarding free public access and free admission;

e. historical changes in free access by the public; and

f. historical changes in support by various governmental entities, including operational funding, use and value of land and buildings owned by the state or the city of New York.

§ 3. Report and recommendations. A report of the findings of such study shall be filed with the governor, the temporary president of the senate, and the speaker of the assembly no later than one year after the effective date of this act. The report shall include recommendations on increasing public access, including expanding free public access, and an analysis of what measures will need to be taken to ensure such access while not undermining the operations or missions of the museums.

§ 4. This act shall take effect immediately.