S T A T E O F N E W Y O R K

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I N A S S E M B L Y

January 15, 2009

Introduced by M. of A. PEOPLES, AUBRY, CAMARA, WRIGHT, CUSICK, JEFFRIES, SCARBOROUGH, BROOK-KRASNY, BOYLAND, GREENE, COOK, ROBINSON, ALFANO, CLARK -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. BENJAMIN, BRENNAN, CAHILL, DelMONTE, DIAZ, GALEF, HEASTIE, JAFFEE, JOHN, MAISEL, REILLY, J. RIVERA, SWEENEY, TITONE -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations

AN ACT to establish a task force on the condition of African American men in New York state

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Legislative intent. The legislature finds that African American men: (a) are disproportionately less likely to complete high school and to obtain a post-secondary education; (b) are more likely to be incarcerated or on parole; (c) are more likely to have lower lifetime economic earnings; (d) are more likely to have been a part of the child welfare population; (e) are more likely to have a shorter life expectancy; and (f) are more likely to have health problems, such as HIV/AIDS, drug dependency, heart disease, obesity, and diabetes. The legislature additionally finds that the state of New York has a compelling interest in determining the causes of these problems and in developing appropriate remedies.

S 2. The New York state task force on the condition of African American men is hereby established. The role of the task force includes but is not limited to:

(a) assessing the causal factors for the condition of African American men;

(b) assessing state programs and initiatives that serve to improve the condition of African American men and identifying the gaps in such services;

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

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(c) developing strategies to reduce duplication of services and to maximize coordination between state agencies, providers and educational institutions, including developing benchmarks to measure progress; and

(d) preparing a report for submission to the governor and the legislature that provides specific recommendations regarding existing state laws, regulations, programs, policies, and practices relating to the condition of African American men in the state.

S 3. The task force shall issue its findings, in the form of a report, no later than December 31, 2010.

S 4. The task force shall consist of 17 members and shall include the commissioner of temporary and disability assistance, the commissioner of children and family services, the commissioner of correctional services, the commissioner of economic development, the commissioner of health, the commissioner of human rights, the commissioner of education, the commissioner of labor and the chancellor of the state university of New York, or a designee of any of such officers. The remaining eight shall be appointed, within 60 days of the effective date of this act, as follows: two shall be appointed by the temporary president of the senate; two shall be appointed by the minority leader of the senate; two shall be appointed by the speaker of the assembly; and two shall be appointed by the minority leader of the assembly. The member from the office of temporary and disability assistance shall serve as the director of the task force and he or she may assign staff as is necessary to carry out the provisions of this section. Task force members shall receive no compensation for their services but shall be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

S 5. The task force may consult with any organization, educational institution, governmental agency, or person, that advocates for African American men.

S 6. The director of the task force may reconvene the task force, with the same or different members, after issuance of the report, to address any further issues associated with the condition of African American men in New York state.

S 7. All departments or agencies of the state or subdivisions thereof shall, at the request of the director, provide the task force with such facilities, assistance, and data as will enable the task force to carry out its powers and duties.

S 8. This act shall take effect immediately.