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

6866

2009-2010 Regular Sessions

I N  A S S E M B L Y

March 13, 2009

Introduced by M. of A. THIELE -- read once and referred to the Committee on Economic Development, Job Creation, Commerce and Industry

AN ACT to amend the economic development law, in relation to establishing the office for new Americans

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

Section 1. The economic development law is amended by adding a new article 15 to read as follows:

ARTICLE 15

OFFICE FOR NEW AMERICANS

SECTION 265. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.
266. OFFICE FOR NEW AMERICANS, DIRECTOR, EMPLOYEES.
267. OBJECTIVES.
268. POWERS AND DUTIES.

S 265. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS. THE LEGISLATURE FINDS THAT SINCE THE FOUNDING OF THIS STATE OUR PROSPERITY AND GREATNESS IS DUE IN LARGE PART TO THE EFFORTS AND SACRIFICES OF OUR IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES. THE LEGISLATURE FURTHER FINDS THAT NEW YORK HAS LONG BEEN A GATEWAY TO AMERICA FOR VAST NUMBERS OF IMMIGRANTS, WHO HAVE COME TO THIS LAND SEEKING BOTH FREEDOM AND OPPORTUNITY FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR FAMILIES, AND THAT THE ANCESTORS OF MILLIONS OF AMERICANS FIRST ENTERED THIS NATION THROUGH NEW YORK CITY, GIVING US A UNIQUE HISTORICAL HERITAGE. THE LEGISLATURE FURTHER FINDS THAT NEW YORK REMAINS A MAJOR ENTRY POINT FOR IMMIGRANTS TO THIS DAY. THE LEGISLATURE FURTHER FINDS THAT IT IS IN BOTH THE SHORT AND LONG TERM INTEREST OF THE STATE THAT NEW IMMIGRANTS, ENTERING THIS COUNTRY LEGALLY AND IN THE HOPE OF BUILDING A FUTURE, BE ASSISTED WITH ACCESSING THE MANY HOMEOWNERSHIP AND ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES THAT EXIST IN THE STATE, SO THAT THEY MAY BE HELPED TO ACHIEVE THE AMERICAN DREAM AND IMPROVE THE PROSPERITY OF THE STATE AS A WHOLE. THE LEGISLATURE FURTHER FINDS THAT A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF OUR COMMUNITIES HAVE SUFFERED FROM LOSS OF POPULATION AND BUSINESSES OVER THE LAST FIFTY

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

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YEARS, WHICH HAS LED TO LARGE NUMBERS OF VACANT HOMES AND BUSINESSES IN THESE COMMUNITIES, AND THAT SUCH COMMUNITIES MAY HAVE AN INTEREST IN ATTRACTING IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES IN ORDER TO HELP REVITALIZE DEPRESSED AREAS AND BUILD FOR THE FUTURE.

S 266. OFFICE FOR NEW AMERICANS, DIRECTOR, EMPLOYEES. THERE IS HEREBY CREATED WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT AN OFFICE FOR NEW AMERICANS. THE DIRECTOR OF SUCH OFFICE SHALL BE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR, SHALL REPORT DIRECTLY TO THE COMMISSIONER ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE DIVISION, AND SHALL HOLD OFFICE AT THE PLEASURE OF THE COMMISSIONER. IT SHALL BE THE DUTY OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE FOR NEW AMERICANS TO ASSIST THE GOVERNOR IN THE FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS AND POLICIES RELATING TO THE INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES INTO THE ECONOMIC FABRIC OF THE STATE. THE DIRECTOR SHALL RECEIVE AN ANNUAL SALARY TO BE FIXED BY THE GOVERNOR WITHIN THE AMOUNT APPROPRIATED THEREFORE. THE DIRECTOR MAY APPOINT SUCH OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES, AGENTS, CONSULTANTS AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES AS HE OR SHE MAY DEEM NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ARTICLE AND PRESCRIBE THEIR DUTIES SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE CIVIL SERVICE LAW AND THE RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION.

S 267. OBJECTIVES. THE OFFICE FOR NEW AMERICANS IS CHARGED WITH ASSISTING BOTH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS WITH AN INTEREST IN ATTRACTING GROUPS OF IMMIGRANTS, AND GROUPS OF IMMIGRANTS WHO MAY BE IN SEARCH OF SUCH OPPORTUNITY. THIS ASSISTANCE SHOULD CONSIST PRIMARILY OF OUTREACH, COORDINATION, INFORMATION, AND REFERRAL SERVICES, AS WELL AS PROVIDING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS WITH ADVICE ON THE STEPS TO BE TAKEN IN ORDER TO SUCCESSFULLY RECRUIT AND PROVIDE SERVICES FOR IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES.

S 268. POWERS AND DUTIES. (1) THE OFFICE WILL COORDINATE AS APPROPRIATE WITH ALL STATE AGENCIES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE OFFICE OF SMALL CITIES, THE DIVISION OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY RENEWAL, THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF REGULATORY REFORM, AND ALL OTHER AGENCIES AS MAY BE APPROPRIATE IN FORWARDING THIS OBJECTIVE. THE OFFICE MAY ALSO WORK IN COOPERATION WITH ANY SUCH NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS THAT THE OFFICE BELIEVES WILL HELP FURTHER ITS GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.

(2) THE OFFICE SHALL BE STRICTLY LIMITED TO OFFERING ITS ASSISTANCE TO COMMUNITIES OF NATURALIZED UNITED STATES CITIZENS AND/OR LEGALLY DOCUMENTED RESIDENT ALIENS AS DEFINED BY THE UNITED STATES DIVISION OF IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT (ICE).

(3) THE OFFICE SHALL BE LIMITED TO ASSISTING BOTH LOCALITIES AND IMMIGRANT GROUPS WITH ACCESSING EXISTING PROGRAMS OF ASSISTANCE THAT WILL PROMOTE THE BUILDING OF VIBRANT, INDEPENDENT, AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON PROMOTING HOME OWNERSHIP AND BUSINESS CREATION. THE OFFICE FOR NEW AMERICANS IS ALSO AUTHORIZED TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS CONSISTENT WITH THE PURPOSES OF THIS ARTICLE, AND TO PROMOTE AWARENESS OF AND ACCESS TO EXISTING STATE AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS THAT WILL ADVANCE THOSE PURPOSES.

(4-A) THE OFFICE SHALL SOLICIT RECOMMENDATIONS FROM LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES, AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT AGENCIES FOR PROMOTING THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS ARTICLE, AND REFER SUCH RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNOR, THE LEGISLATURE AND APPROPRIATE STATE AGENCIES OR AUTHORITIES.

(4-B) THE OFFICE SHALL CONDUCT INVESTIGATIONS, RESEARCH, STUDIES AND ANALYSES OF MATTERS AFFECTING THE INTERESTS OF IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE STATE CONSISTENT WITH THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS ARTICLE.

S 2. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after it shall have become a law.