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

9524

I N A S S E M B L Y

March 10, 2016

Introduced by M. of A. DenDEKKER -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations

AN ACT to create a temporary New York State World War I 100th anniversary commemoration commission; and providing for the termination of such commission

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

Section 1. Legislative findings. The legislature hereby finds that Armistice Day has been marked on November 11th every year since 1918 commemorating the day the Allied forces signed an agreement with the Germans that would end World War I. The cost in human suffering during World War I, originally known as the Great War, was on a scale unprecedented in human history. Between 1914 and 1918, there were over 37 million casualties with over 13,000 New Yorkers losing their lives. Among the noteworthy New York regiments fighting in World War I include New York's 69th Infantry Regiment, referred to as the "Fighting 69th" and New York's 369th Infantry Regiment, popularly known as the "Harlem Hellfighters", the first African American regiment to serve with the American Expeditionary Forces during World War I. There are several sites in New York with historical significance to World War I including: the Pier A clock tower in Battery Park, the armory of the 14th New York regiment in Park Slope, the Chelsea World War I statute on 9th and 28th, the 7th Regiment statute in Central Park, the Brooklyn World War I memorial in Prospect Park, the Richmond Hill statute in Queens, and others. The legislature, therefore, declares that there is a need to create a New York State World War I 100th anniversary commemoration commission to develop and execute plans for projects and activities recognizing the 100th year anniversary of World War I, with particular emphasis on those New Yorkers who made the supreme sacrifice and those who returned home wounded.

S 2. New York State World War I 100th anniversary commemoration commission created. (1) There is hereby a temporary state commission to be known as the "New York State World War I 100th anniversary commemoration commission".

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

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(2) Definitions. As used in this act: "Commission" means the New York State World War I 100th anniversary commemoration commission created by this section.

(3) Tasks. The Commission is charged with the following duties:

a. To plan, develop and execute programs, projects, and activities to commemorate the centennial of World War I and New York's and New Yorkers' role in it;

b. To encourage private organizations, state agencies, and local government in New York to organize and participate in activities commemorating the centennial of World War I;

c. Assist with efforts to protect, improve, and develop educational and interpretive institutions, sites, and museums related to World War I for educational, recreational, and tourism purposes; and

d. Perform other actions necessary to carry out the duties of the Commission.

(4) Membership:

a. The Commission shall consist of 11 members to be appointed as follows: The commissioner of the department of parks, recreation and historic preservation or his or her duly designated representative, the commissioner of the department of education or his or her duly designated representative, the commissioner of the department of economic development or his or her duly designated representative, and eight at-large members, of which, two members shall be appointed by the governor, two members shall be appointed by the temporary president of the senate, two members shall be appointed by the speaker of the assembly, one member shall be appointed by the minority leader of the senate and one member shall be appointed by the minority leader of the assembly. The commissioner of the department of parks, recreation and historic preservation or his or her duly designated representative shall serve as chairperson of the Commission. The eight appointed members shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing official. Vacancies shall be filled in the manner provided for original appointments.

b. The members of the Commission shall receive no compensation for their services.

c. Notwithstanding any inconsistent provision of any general, special or local law, ordinance, resolution or charter, no officer, member or employee of the state or of any public corporation shall forfeit his or her office or employment by reason of his or her acceptance of appointment as a member of the Commission, nor shall service as such Commission member be deemed incompatible or in conflict with such office or employment.

d. The Commission shall appoint, designate, or remove such staff from the Commission as may be necessary to carry out its duties and performance of its functions, from current state agency personnel.

e. The Commission may meet and hold public and/or private hearings within or without the state, and shall have all the powers of a legislative committee pursuant to the legislative law; except it shall not have the power to issue subpoenas pursuant to section 62-a of the legislative law.

f. The Commission may request and shall receive from any subdivision, department, board, commission, office, agency, or other instrumentality of the state or of any political subdivision thereof such facilities, assistance and data as it deems necessary or desirable for the proper execution of its powers and duties and to effectuate the purposes set forth in this act.

g. The Commission is hereby authorized and empowered to enter into any agreements and to do and perform any acts that may be necessary, desirable or proper to carry out the purposes and objectives of this act.

(5) Action Plan: By June 30th, 2017, the Commission shall present to the Governor and Legislature an Action Plan to achieve the Commission's tasks. The report shall contain recommendations to commemorate the centennial of World War I. The Commission shall update the Action Plan as necessary.

(6) Termination: The Commission shall continue in existence until November 12, 2018 at which time it shall be deemed to be repealed.

S 3. This act shall take effect immediately.