

STATE OF NEW YORK

4224

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

February 1, 2017

Introduced by M. of A. SIMOTAS, AUBRY, ENGLEBRIGHT -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations

AN ACT to amend the state finance law, in relation to establishing the commission on the infrastructure of New York state

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

Section 1. The state finance law is amended by adding a new article 17 to read as follows:

ARTICLE XVII

COMMISSION ON THE INFRASTRUCTURE OF NEW YORK STATE

Section 250. Definitions.

251. Commission on the infrastructure of New York state; creation; procedure.

252. Powers and duties.

§ 250. Definitions. As used in this article, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

1. "Acquisition" means any necessary activities for siting a facility, equipment, structures or rolling stock by purchase, lease-purchase, trade or donation.

2. "Commission" means the commission on the infrastructure of New York state established pursuant to section two hundred fifty-one of this article.

3. "Construction" means:

(a) the design, planning and erection of new infrastructure;

(b) the expansion of existing infrastructure;

(c) the reconstruction of an infrastructure project at an existing site; and

(d) the installation of initial or replacement infrastructure equipment.

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

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1 4. "Infrastructure" means a nonmilitary structure or facility, and any
2 equipment and any nonstructural elements associated with such a struc-
3 ture or facility, including:

4 (a) a surface transportation facility (such as a road, bridge, tunnel,
5 highway, public transportation facility, and freight and passenger
6 rail), as the commission determines to be appropriate;

7 (b) a mass transit facility;

8 (c) an airport or airway facility;

9 (d) a resource recovery facility;

10 (e) a water supply and distribution system;

11 (f) a wastewater collection, conveyance, or treatment system, and
12 related facilities;

13 (g) a stormwater treatment system to manage, reduce, treat or reuse
14 municipal stormwater;

15 (h) waterways, locks, dams and associated facilities;

16 (i) a breakwater, levee or any related flood damage reduction facili-
17 ty;

18 (j) a dock or port;

19 (k) a solid waste disposal facility;

20 (l) a facility essential to the operation of telecommunications equip-
21 ment, as the commission determines to be appropriate; and

22 (m) a facility essential to the supply of energy, including but not
23 limited to energy in the form of electricity, natural gas, coal, oil and
24 other petroleum products, and steam, as the commission determines to be
25 appropriate.

26 5. "Nonstructural elements" means:

27 (a) any feature that preserves and restores a natural process, a land-
28 form (including a floodplain), a natural vegetated stream side buffer,
29 wetland, or any other topographical feature that can slow, filter, and
30 naturally store stormwater runoff and flood waters;

31 (b) any natural design technique that percolates, filters, stores,
32 evaporates and detains water close to the source of the water; and

33 (c) any feature that minimizes or disconnects impervious surfaces to
34 slow runoff or allow precipitation to percolate.

35 6. "Maintenance" means any regularly scheduled activity, such as a
36 routine repair, intended to ensure that infrastructure continues to
37 operate efficiently and as intended.

38 7. "Rehabilitation" means an action to extend the useful life or
39 improve the effectiveness of existing infrastructure, including:

40 (a) the correction of a deficiency;

41 (b) the modernization or replacement of equipment;

42 (c) the modernization of, or replacement of parts for, rolling stock
43 relating to infrastructure;

44 (d) the use of nonstructural elements; and

45 (e) the removal of infrastructure that is deteriorated or no longer
46 useful.

47 § 251. Commission on the infrastructure of New York state; creation;
48 procedure. 1. The commission on the infrastructure of New York state is
49 hereby created to have and exercise the powers, duties and prerogatives
50 provided by the provisions of this article and any other provision of
51 law.

52 2. The purpose of the commission is to ensure that the infrastructure
53 of the state meets current and future demand and facilitates economic
54 growth, is maintained in a manner that ensures public safety, and is
55 developed or modified in a sustainable manner.

1 3. The commission shall consist of five members appointed by the
2 governor, one of whom shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the
3 temporary president of the senate, one of whom shall be appointed upon
4 the recommendation of the speaker of the assembly, and one of whom shall
5 be appointed upon the recommendation of the comptroller. Each member of
6 the commission shall have experience in one or more of the fields of
7 economics, public administration, civil engineering, public works,
8 construction or a related design profession, planning, public investment
9 financing, environmental engineering, or water resources engineering.
10 The term of the members first appointed shall expire January thirty-
11 first, two thousand twenty-two, and thereafter their successors shall
12 serve for terms of two years ending on January thirty-first in each
13 year. Upon recommendation of the nominating official, the governor may
14 replace any member in accordance with the provisions of this subdivision
15 for the appointment of members. The governor shall designate one of the
16 members to serve as chair. Any determination of the commission shall be
17 evidenced by a certification thereof executed by all the voting members.
18 Each member of the commission shall be entitled to designate a represen-
19 tative to attend meetings of the commission in his or her place, and to
20 vote or otherwise act on his or her behalf in his or her absence.
21 Notice of such designation shall be furnished in writing to the commis-
22 sion by the designating member. A representative shall serve at the
23 pleasure of the designating member during the member's term of office. A
24 representative shall not be authorized to delegate any of his or her
25 duties or functions to any other person. The commission shall meet at
26 the call of the chair or upon request of the majority of the members. A
27 majority of the members of the commission shall constitute a quorum, but
28 a lesser number of members may conduct hearings.

29 4. Notwithstanding any inconsistent provision of law, no officer or
30 employee of the state, of any political subdivision of the state, of any
31 governmental entity operating any public school or college, or of any
32 other public agency or instrumentality or unit of government which exer-
33 cises governmental powers under the laws of the state, shall forfeit
34 such office or employment by reason of acceptance or appointment as a
35 member, representative, officer, employee or agent of the commission nor
36 shall service as such member, representative, officer, employee or agent
37 of the commission be deemed incompatible or in conflict with such office
38 or employment. The members, their representatives, officers and staff to
39 the commission shall be deemed employees within the meaning of section
40 seventeen of the public officers law.

41 5. The members of the commission shall serve without salary or per
42 diem allowance but shall be entitled to reimbursement for actual and
43 necessary expenses incurred in the performance of official duties pursu-
44 ant to this article or other provision of law; provided, however, that
45 such members and representatives are not, at the time such expenses are
46 incurred, public employees otherwise entitled to such reimbursement.

47 § 252. Powers and duties. 1. The commission shall have the power to:

48 (a) establish and maintain a principal office within the state;

49 (b) appoint a secretary, counsel, and such other employees and agents
50 as it may deem necessary, fix their compensation within the limitations
51 provided by law and subject to the availability of appropriations there-
52 for, and prescribe their duties;

53 (c) hold such hearings, meet and act at such times and places, take
54 such testimony, administer such oaths or affirmations and receive such
55 evidence as the commission considers advisable to carry out its respon-
56 sibilities;

1 (d) require the production of any books and papers deemed relevant, or
2 material to any investigation, examination or review;

3 (e) request and receive from any department, division, board, commis-
4 sion or other agency of the state, including any public authority or
5 public benefit corporation, one or more of the members of which is
6 appointed by the governor, or from any political subdivision of the
7 state, any information and resources necessary to carry out the respon-
8 sibilities and provisions set forth in this section;

9 (f) enter into contracts with any person, firm, partnership, limited
10 liability company, corporation, not-for-profit corporation, political
11 subdivision of the state, or governmental entity;

12 (g) accept, as agent of the state, any gift, grant, devise or bequest,
13 whether conditional or unconditional notwithstanding the provisions of
14 section eleven of this chapter, including federal grants, for any of the
15 purposes of this article. Any monies so received may be expended by the
16 commission to effectuate any purpose of this article, subject to the
17 same limitations as to approval of expenditures and audit as are
18 prescribed for state monies appropriated for the purposes of this arti-
19 cle;

20 (h) issue such reports and other documents as the commission deter-
21 mines to be necessary or advisable;

22 (i) advise and make recommendations to the governor, the legislature,
23 the comptroller, and other agencies, authorities and political subdivi-
24 sions of the state on matters affecting the condition of the state's
25 infrastructure; and

26 (j) perform any other functions that are necessary or appropriate to
27 fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the office.

28 2. The commission shall be empowered to initiate, intervene in or
29 participate in any proceedings before the public service commission or
30 other agency or entity, to the extent that such proceedings are related
31 to the proper planning, financing, construction, maintenance or rehabil-
32 itation of infrastructure under the regulatory jurisdiction of such
33 commission, agency or entity.

34 3. The commission shall study the condition of the infrastructure of
35 the state on an ongoing basis, including but not limited to a review of
36 the following matters:

37 (a) the capacity of infrastructure to sustain current and anticipated
38 economic development and competitiveness, including long-term economic
39 growth, including the potential return to the state economy on invest-
40 ments in new infrastructure as opposed to investments in existing
41 infrastructure;

42 (b) the age and condition of public infrastructure (including
43 congestion and changes in the condition of that infrastructure as
44 compared with preceding years);

45 (c) the methods used to finance the construction, acquisition, reha-
46 bilitation and maintenance of infrastructure (including general obli-
47 gation bonds, tax-credit bonds, revenue bonds, user fees, excise taxes,
48 direct governmental assistance and private investment);

49 (d) any trends or innovations in methods used to finance the
50 construction, acquisition, rehabilitation and maintenance of infrastruc-
51 ture;

52 (e) investment requirements, by type of infrastructure, that are
53 necessary to maintain the current condition and performance of the
54 infrastructure and the investment needed (adjusted for inflation and
55 expressed in real dollars) to improve infrastructure in the future;

1 (f) based on the current level of expenditure (calculated as a
2 percentage of total expenditure and in constant dollars) by federal,
3 state and local governments;

4 (i) the projected amount of need the expenditures will meet five,
5 fifteen, thirty and fifty years after the effective date of this arti-
6 cle; and

7 (ii) the levels of investment requirements, as identified in paragraph
8 (e) of this subdivision;

9 (g) trends or innovations in infrastructure procurement methods;

10 (h) trends or innovations in construction methods or materials for
11 infrastructure;

12 (i) the impact of local development patterns of demand for funding of
13 infrastructure;

14 (j) the impact of deferred maintenance; and

15 (k) the collateral impact of deteriorated infrastructure.

16 4. The commission shall develop recommendations based on initial
17 studies undertaken pursuant to subdivision three of this section, and
18 shall report its findings and recommendations to the governor, the
19 legislature and the comptroller not later than eighteen months after the
20 effective date of this article. The recommendations of the commission
21 shall include recommended improvements in prioritizing the planning and
22 funding of infrastructure investments, improved procedures for ensuring
23 that schedules for maintenance and rehabilitation of infrastructure are
24 adhered to, and improvements in criteria and procedures that may be used
25 by state agencies and authorities and local governments in:

26 (a) inventorying existing and needed infrastructure improvements;

27 (b) assessing the condition of infrastructure improvements;

28 (c) developing uniform criteria and procedures for use in conducting
29 the inventories and assessments; and

30 (d) maintaining data in a form that is readily accessible to the
31 public.

32 5. The commission shall report updated findings and recommendations in
33 a manner consistent with the provisions of subdivision four of this
34 section. Such reports shall be issued not later than the last day of the
35 calendar year following the year in which the report required by subdivi-
36 sion four of this section is issued and, thereafter, on an annual
37 basis.

38 6. The commission shall advocate for the need for equitable treatment
39 of the infrastructure needs of the state in any appropriate federal
40 proceeding and in any matter otherwise under consideration by the feder-
41 al government. The commission shall monitor and participate in any eval-
42 uations conducted by federal agencies of the state of the infrastructure
43 of the United States.

44 § 2. This act shall take effect on the sixtieth day after it shall
45 have become a law.