

# STATE OF NEW YORK

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6246--A

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

## IN SENATE

May 11, 2017

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Introduced by Sen. COMRIE -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation -- recommitted to the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation in accordance with Senate Rule 6, sec. 8 -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the parks, recreation and historic preservation law, in relation to providing for the people's history project

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

1 Section 1. The parks, recreation and historic preservation law is  
2 amended by adding a new section 19.07 to read as follows:

3 § 19.07 People's history project. 1. The legislature hereby finds and  
4 declares that the history of New York state is replete with persons,  
5 sites, and events of both local and statewide importance that have here-  
6 tofore been overlooked by mainstream, established history. The state's  
7 historical sites and history as it is taught in school and popularly  
8 recorded fail to take into consideration the multitude of peoples who  
9 have built this state, a state that has been significantly impacted by  
10 immigrant and ethnic populations of this country and home to the majori-  
11 ty of social and economic movements of the last four hundred years. It  
12 is time to recognize those from every background who have contributed to  
13 the history of this state, and give new cause for pride and create new  
14 role models for all people. Recognizing such historical sites, events  
15 and persons will also contribute to tourism, especially special niche  
16 tourism, and consequently contribute to the economic development of the  
17 state, especially in areas that are underdeveloped economically and  
18 disadvantaged.

19 2. The commissioner shall establish within the office a people's  
20 history committee. The members of the committee shall be appointed by  
21 the commissioner and shall be representative of academic and profes-

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

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1 sional historians, members of local historical societies and other such  
2 groups. Such members of the committee shall reflect the diversity of the  
3 residents of this state with regard to race, ethnicity, gender,  
4 language, and geographic residence. The members of the committee shall  
5 serve without compensation, but shall be allowed their actual and neces-  
6 sary expenses.

7 3. The commissioner shall establish a process whereby the people of  
8 the state may nominate persons, sites, and events of historical signif-  
9 icance each year for inclusion in the people's history project who may  
10 be of local, regional, statewide or national significance. The commit-  
11 tee, in consultation with local historians, historical societies, and  
12 other authorities, where appropriate, shall evaluate the merits of such  
13 nominees, and may select up to ten persons, sites or events per year for  
14 inclusion in the people's history project. In its evaluation of the  
15 merits of nominees, such commission shall consider, including but not  
16 limited to, the following factors: the historical impact of such person,  
17 site or event, how such impact changed history, and the effect that such  
18 person, site or event had on the state and whether such person, site, or  
19 event that has been overlooked.

20 4. For nominees approved by the committee, suitable commemorative  
21 markers of selected sites may be erected at the appropriate location or  
22 locations as determined by the commissioner. The office shall maintain a  
23 website listing the persons, sites, and events selected by the commit-  
24 tee, a description thereof, a map showing the locations thereof if  
25 applicable, and any other relevant information.

26 § 2. This act shall take effect on the one hundred twentieth day after  
27 it shall have become a law; provided that effective immediately the  
28 commissioner of parks, recreation and historic preservation is author-  
29 ized to promulgate any and all rules and regulations and take any other  
30 measures necessary to implement this act on its effective date.