

BY: Senator STEWART-COUSINS

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY
proposing to establish the Joint Legislative Task
Force on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Tolerance,
and providing for such task force's powers and
duties

WHEREAS, The State has an obligation to address the many impacts of longstanding discrimination against marginalized communities resulting in disparate outcomes in many aspects of their lives, including but not limited to health, employment, education, housing; and

WHEREAS, The legislature, as the lawmaking body in the state, has a responsibility to respond to these issues; and

WHEREAS, There is an urgent need now, in this time of increased injustice, to holistically examine the contributing causes of discrimination against these communities and work to develop comprehensive solutions; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED (if the &HOUSE concur), That a joint legislative task force, to be known as the "Joint Legislative Task Force on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Tolerance" is hereby created to consist of thirty members to be appointed as follows: fifteen members of the Senate to be appointed by the Temporary President of the Senate and fifteen members of the Assembly to be appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly. The Temporary President of the Senate and the Speaker of the Assembly shall each designate one of their appointees to serve as a co-chair of such task force. Any vacancy in the membership of such task force shall be filled by the officer authorized to make the original appointment. In addition, the Temporary President of the Senate and the Speaker of the Assembly shall serve as ex-officio, non-voting members of such task force; and be it further

RESOLVED (if the &HOUSE concur), That the scope of authority for such task force shall be to examine and analyze the existing programs, laws, rules, and regulations in the state and how they contribute to or fail to address the discrimination faced by marginalized communities, and work to develop holistic solutions in response to those findings; provided, however, that bills shall not be referred to such task force for consideration and such task force shall not have the power to report or hold for further consideration any bill; and be it further

RESOLVED (if the &HOUSE concur), That the task force shall also explore ways to end explicit and implicit bias, including preventing the proliferation of hateful rhetoric that turns into violent actions, promote and educate New Yorkers regarding the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in our government, workplaces, and society as a whole, and to further measures promoting the tolerance and acceptance of the different and unique nature of all of the citizens of the state; and be it further

RESOLVED (if the &HOUSE concur), That the task force may sit at any place within the state as it may determine to conduct its business and hold meetings and hearings. In accordance with section 105 of the Public Officers Law, it may conduct executive sessions when the subject matter under consideration warrants such sessions in the determination of the task force. Such task force shall have the power to adopt rules for the conduct of its proceedings, and it shall have all the powers of a legislative committee as provided by the Legislative Law, including, but not limited to the power to compel testimony or the production of documents pursuant to section 62-a of the Legislative Law, provided that any such process to compel testimony or produce documents or other information shall only be authorized jointly by the co-chairs of the task force, in their discretion; and be it further

RESOLVED (if the &HOUSE concur), That the task force shall promulgate such rules and procedures for preserving and ensuring the confidentiality of information it may determine warrants such confidentiality, including requiring the members of the task force and staff engaged by the task force to maintain the confidentiality of such information; and be it further

RESOLVED (if the &HOUSE concur), That the task force shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Temporary President of the Senate and the Speaker of the Assembly by December 15, 2023, and annually thereafter.