

# STATE OF NEW YORK

3177

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

## IN SENATE

January 28, 2021

Introduced by Sen. SANDERS -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Finance

AN ACT establishing the New York state commission on economic inequality, equal opportunity, and competitiveness

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

1 Section 1. Legislative intent. It shall be the policy of New York  
2 state to work toward reducing economic inequality, eliminating poverty,  
3 achieving equal opportunity and full employment, and boosting economic  
4 competitiveness and growth for the purpose of justice, equality, democ-  
5 racy, fairness, the general welfare, and strengthening the economy of  
6 New York state.

7 § 2. A temporary state commission, to be known as the New York state  
8 commission on economic inequality, equal opportunity, and competitive-  
9 ness, is hereby created to investigate, evaluate, and make recommenda-  
10 tions concerning how to work toward, in New York state, reducing econom-  
11 ic inequality, eliminating poverty, achieving equal opportunity and full  
12 employment, and boosting economic competitiveness and growth.

13 § 3. (a) The commission shall consist of seventeen members, to be  
14 appointed as follows: nine members to be appointed by the governor, one  
15 of whom shall be the chair; three members to be appointed by the tempo-  
16 rary president of the senate; one member appointed by the senate minori-  
17 ty leader; three members appointed by the speaker of the assembly; and  
18 one member appointed by the assembly minority leader.

19 (b) The members of the commission shall receive no compensation for  
20 their services, but shall be allowed their actual and necessary expenses  
21 incurred in the performance of their duties under this act. The commis-  
22 sion may employ and at pleasure remove such personnel as it may deem  
23 necessary for the performance of its functions and fix their compen-  
24 sation within the amounts made available by appropriation therefor.

25 § 4. The commission shall investigate:

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

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1 (a) How to work toward reducing economic inequality in New York state  
2 by exploring various topics, including but not limited to:  
3 (1) income inequality;  
4 (2) wealth inequality;  
5 (3) the shrinking middle class;  
6 (4) impacts of the Great Recession;  
7 (5) impacts of tax policy and other related policies;  
8 (6) minimum wage, wage policies and workers' bargaining power; and  
9 (7) the economic and social impact of economic inequality, including  
10 as it relates to race, class, gender, age, national origin, and sexual  
11 orientation.

12 (b) How to work toward eliminating poverty in New York state by exam-  
13 ining various topics, including but not limited to:

14 (1) class, race, gender, and poverty;  
15 (2) homelessness;  
16 (3) children and families in poverty;  
17 (4) senior citizens;  
18 (5) education;  
19 (6) nutrition and health;  
20 (7) alcohol and drug addiction;  
21 (8) criminal justice;  
22 (9) safety nets; and  
23 (10) employment.

24 (c) How to work toward achieving equal opportunity in New York state  
25 by examining various topics, including but not limited to:

26 (1) class, race, gender, and equal opportunity;  
27 (2) employment;  
28 (3) education;  
29 (4) access to capital; and  
30 (5) access to housing, loans, transportation, banking, insurance and  
31 various economic areas.

32 (d) How to work toward achieving full employment in New York state by  
33 examining various topics, including but not limited to:

34 (1) education;  
35 (2) workforce training;  
36 (3) employment opportunities;  
37 (4) wages and livable income; and  
38 (5) entrepreneurialism.

39 (e) How to boost economic competitiveness and economic growth in New  
40 York state by examining various topics, including but not limited to:

41 (1) education;  
42 (2) workforce development;  
43 (3) tax policy, health care policy, and other policies;  
44 (4) impacts of international trade;  
45 (5) the manufacturing sector; and  
46 (6) emerging technologies and high tech.

47 § 5. (a) For the accomplishment of its purposes, the commission may  
48 meet and hold public and/or private hearings within or without the  
49 state, and shall have all the powers of a legislative committee pursuant  
50 to the legislative law. The commission is authorized and empowered to  
51 undertake any studies, inquiries, surveys or analyses it may deem rele-  
52 vant through its own personnel or in cooperation with or by agreement  
53 with any other public or private agency.

54 (b) To the maximum extent feasible, the commission may request and  
55 shall be entitled to receive and shall utilize and be provided with such  
56 facilities, resources and data from any court in the state and from any

1 subdivision, department, board, bureau, commission, office, agency or  
2 other instrumentality of the state or of any political subdivision ther-  
3 eof as it deems necessary or desirable for the proper execution of its  
4 powers and duties and to effectuate the purposes set forth in this act.

5 (c) The commission is hereby authorized and empowered to enter into  
6 any agreements and to do and perform any acts that may be necessary,  
7 desirable or proper to carry out the purposes and objectives of this  
8 act.

9 § 6. The commission shall make recommendations and a report of its  
10 findings. The commission shall submit such recommendations and report,  
11 including any recommendations for legislative action as it may deem  
12 necessary and appropriate, to the governor, the temporary president of  
13 the senate, the speaker of the assembly, and make public online on the  
14 governor's website no later than December first, two thousand twenty-  
15 two.

16 § 7. This act shall take effect immediately.