STATE OF NEW YORK

7367

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

September 8, 2021

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

AN ACT to amend the education law and the parks, recreation and historic preservation law, in relation to establishing the Frederick Douglass heritage trail commission

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

Section 1. The education law is amended by adding a new section 233-d to read as follows:

§ 233-d. Frederick Douglass heritage trail commission. 1. a. There is hereby established within the department the Frederick Douglass heritage trail commission. The commission shall consist of twelve members representative of academic or public historians, corporations, foundations, historical societies, civic organizations, and religious denominations, to be appointed as follows:

i. three members to be appointed by the governor;

ii. three members to be appointed by the board of regents;

iii. two members to be appointed by the temporary president of the senate;

iv. one member to be appointed by the minority leader of the senate;

v. two members to be appointed by the speaker of the assembly; and

vi. one member to be appointed by the minority leader of the assembly.

In addition, the following state officers, or their designees, shall serve as members of the commission: the commissioner of education, the head of the state museum, the head of the state archives, the head of the office of state history, the commissioner of economic development, the head of the state tourism advisory council, and the commissioner of parks, recreation and historic preservation.

b. The commission shall begin functioning upon the appointment of a majority of its members. The chair of the commission shall be chosen by the members of the commission for a three year term. Commission members,

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

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other than ex officio members, shall serve for terms of five years and vacancies shall be appointed in the same manner as provided for original appointments.

c. The department and the office of parks, recreation and historic preservation may provide the commission with such staff, equipment, and facilities as it may need.

2. The commission shall conduct a study which shall include, but not be limited to, documenting the history of Frederick Douglass' travel within the state including identifying sites most likely to be eligible for inclusion on the national or state registers of historic places, or both; providing for the historic research and compilation of contemporaneous reports and records necessary to document the sites in New York state where Douglass stayed or gave speeches, as well as individuals and organizations who he met with in his travels; and developing cultural and historic guidebooks, local histories and the publication of public and private documents relating to Frederick Douglass' time in the state.

3. As part of its responsibilities the commission shall be charged with developing and implementing a master plan; sponsoring commemorations, linkages, seminars and public forum; assisting, encouraging, and promoting the making of applications for inclusion on the national or state registers of historic places by the parties eligible to do so and the inclusion of such places therein; and developing partnerships and seeking private and public funds to carry out activities to protect, preserve, and promote the important legacy and lessons of Frederick Douglass and create a heritage trail throughout New York state charting where Douglass traveled in the state.

4. The commission shall report annually to the governor, the legislature, and the board of regents for a period of five years from the date of establishment of the commission, but beginning no later than the first of January next succeeding the effective date of this section.

§ 2. Section 19.03 of the parks, recreation and historic preservation law is amended by adding a new subdivision 5 to read as follows:

5. Cooperate with the department of education and the Frederick Douglass heritage trail commission in the performance of their duties in connection with the Frederick Douglass heritage trail.

§ 3. This act shall take effect immediately.