STATE OF NEW YORK

9024

IN ASSEMBLY

February 5, 2024

Introduced by M. of A. LUCAS -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to establishing the commission on public safety, emergency preparedness, and mental health

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

Section 1. The executive law is amended by adding a new article 49-C to read as follows:

ARTICLE 49-C

COMMISSION ON PUBLIC SAFETY, EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, AND MENTAL HEALTH

Section 996. Definitions.
996-a. Commission on public safety, emergency preparedness, and mental health.
996-b. Division of school safety.
996-c. Division of emergency preparedness.
996-d. Division of mental health.
996-e. Community engagement and public oversight.
996-f. Utilization of other agency assistance.
996-g. Reports.

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

1. "commission" shall mean the commission on public safety, emergency preparedness, and mental health established by this article.

2. "state agency" shall mean the state and any department, division, board, bureau, commission or agency of the state or any political subdivision thereof.

§ 996-a. Commission on public safety, emergency preparedness, and mental health. 1. There is hereby created within the executive department a commission on public safety, emergency preparedness, and mental health consisting of the superintendent of state police, commissioner of the division of homeland security and emergency services, commissioner of education, the chairperson of the disaster preparedness commission, the commissioner of health, and the commissioner of mental health. Each member agency may designate an executive level officer of that agency,

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

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with responsibility for disaster preparedness matters, who may represent that agency on the commission.

2. The commission shall elect a chair, vice-chair, and any other necessary officers from among the members of the commission. A majority of the members of the commission then in office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business or the exercise of any power or function of the commission. The commission, on call of the chairperson, shall meet at least quarterly and at such other times as may be necessary. The agenda and meeting place of all regular meetings shall be made available to the public in advance of such meetings and all such meetings shall be open to the public. An act, determination or decision of the majority of the members present during the presence of a quorum shall be held to be the act, determination, or decision of the commission.

3. The members of the commission shall be allowed their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties under this article but shall receive no additional compensation for services rendered pursuant to this article.

4. The commission shall have the following powers and responsibilities:

(a) work with the division of school safety, division of emergency preparedness, and the division of mental health to provide resources, training, and support to schools and the community, as well as promote awareness and reduce the stigma surrounding mental health.

(b) work with local emergency management agencies and mental health organizations to improve the community's ability to respond to natural disasters, public health emergencies, and other critical incidents.

(c) address critical issues related to public safety, emergency preparedness, and mental health.

(d) provide a comprehensive approach to public safety, emergency preparedness, and mental health.

(e) improve the overall safety and well-being of the community.

(f) provide resources and support to schools and the community to promote mental health awareness and reduce the stigma surrounding mental health.

(g) prioritize community engagement and public oversight.

§ 996-b. Division of school safety. The division of school safety shall be responsible for ensuring the safety of students, teachers, and staff in schools. The division of school safety shall consist of the members of the commission with representatives from local law enforcement, school administrators, and school safety experts. The division of school safety shall provide training and resources to schools, including but not limited to threat assessments, school safety drills, and active shooter response plans.

§ 996-c. Division of emergency preparedness. The division of emergency preparedness shall be responsible for developing and implementing emergency preparedness plans for the community. The division of emergency preparedness shall consist of the members of the commission with representatives from local emergency management agencies, first responders, and public health officials. The division of emergency preparedness shall improve the ability of communities to respond to natural disasters, public health emergencies, and other critical incidents.

§ 996-d. Division of mental health. The division of mental health shall be responsible for promoting mental health awareness in schools and the community. The division of mental health shall consist of the members of the commission with representatives from local mental health

organizations, school counselors, and mental health professionals. The division of mental health shall provide mental health resources and training to schools, as well as support and referrals for students, teachers, and staff.

§ 996-e. Community engagement and public oversight. The commission shall maintain a website where a member of the public can leave a public comment on the commission. The commission shall also conduct hearings at least twice a year where the public can comment on the commission. One such hearing shall occur in a city with a population of one million or more and another such hearing shall not occur in a city with a population of one million or more.

§ 996-f. Utilization of other agency assistance. All state agencies are hereby authorized and directed to provide assistance and available resources, as requested by the commission, in order to effectuate the purposes of this article.

§ 996-g. Reports. The commission shall report on its progress, accomplishments, findings, conclusions, recommendations, and activities to the governor and to the legislature annually on or before the thirty-first day of March of each year.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.