STATE OF NEW YORK

633

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 5, 2023

Introduced by Sen. COMRIE -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Higher Education

AN ACT to amend the education law and the state finance law, in relation to establishing the New York state violence in mass media research program

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 239-d to read as follows:

§ 239-d. New York state violence in mass media research program. 1. Program formation and goals. Subject to amounts available by appropriation, the New York state violence in mass media research program is hereby created within the firearm violence research institute. The purposes of such program shall include:

(a) advising the governor, governmental agencies, the regents, and the legislature on matters relating to the effects of reporting on violent crime practices in New York state as it relates to unintentionally glorifying certain violent crimes in such a way that encourages copycat violent crimes, contributing to negative stereotyping or prejudicing jurors in rulings on private citizens;

(b) fostering, pursuing and sponsoring collaborative research on the effects of mass media violent crime reporting;

(c) increasing understanding by establishing and reporting on what is known and what is not known about the effects of reporting on violent crime by mass media;

(d) identifying priority needs for the research of the effects mass media reporting on violent crime and inventory work within New York that currently are not receiving adequate attention and identifying public or private entities that are best situated to address such needs, thereby leading to better coordination of firearm violence research efforts in the state;

(e) promoting awareness of existing and new sources of information created by psychologists and other experts on the effects of current mass media reporting of violent crime while educating elected officials,

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

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governmental agencies, and the general public on these issues through such means as it may determine;

(f) organizing and sponsoring meetings on firearm violence topics;

(g) encouraging the establishment of networks of collaborating experts engaged in related aspects of firearm violence research;

(h) raising sensitivity to firearm violence concerns among state and local government agencies, and serving as a forum for enhanced interagency information sharing and cooperation;

(i) working on a continuing basis with policymakers in the legislature and state agencies to identify, implement, and evaluate innovative firearm violence prevention policies and programs;

(j) recruiting and providing specialized training opportunities for new researchers, including experienced investigators in related fields who are beginning work on mass public violence, young investigators who have completed their education, experts in journalism law, postdoctoral scholars, doctoral students, undergraduates, and representatives from mass media; and

(k) providing copies of their research publications to the legislature and to agencies supplying data used in the conduct of such research as soon as is practicable following publication.

2. Research. The New York state firearm violence research institute shall foster, pursue, and sponsor basic, translational, and transformative research, field studies, and all other such activities to research:

(a) the nature of mass media reporting of violence, including what is displayed, including but not limited to names and faces of perpetrators, crime scenes, and plans, and individual and societal determinants of risk for involvement in mass public violence, whether as a victim or a perpetrator;

(b) the individual, community, and societal consequences of potentially irresponsible mass media reporting practices regarding violent crime;

(c) the prevention and treatment of mass public violence at the individual, community, and societal levels; and

(d) the effect of mass media reporting on contributing to racial profiling and stereotyping as it relates to arrests, juror outcomes, and the violation of the privacy of private citizens scheduled for trial, but not yet convicted of a crime.

3. Financing. The violence in mass media research program shall be funded through the firearm violence research fund established pursuant to section ninety-seven-j of the state finance law.

§ 2. Subdivision 5 of section 97-j of the state finance law, as amended by chapter 151 of the laws of 2022, is amended to read as follows:

5. Moneys in the firearm violence research fund, following appropriation by the legislature, shall be available to the New York firearm violence research institute for its activities as set forth in [~~section~~] sections two hundred thirty-nine-d and three hundred fifty-five-e of the education law.

§ 3. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and completed by the commissioner of education on or before such effective date.