STATE OF NEW YORK

5909--A

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

March 24, 2023

Introduced by M. of A. EPSTEIN -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations -- recommitted to the Committee on Governmental Operations in accordance with Assembly Rule 3, sec. 2 -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to establishing a chief sustainability officer

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 section 94-d to read as follows:

§ 94-d. Chief sustainability officer. 1. Purpose. The chief sustainability officer shall coordinate efforts across all agencies and other state government entities to address climate change mitigation and climate sustainability efforts in New York state.

2. Definitions. For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Officer" shall mean the chief sustainability officer appointed pursuant to this section.

(b) "State agency" or "state agencies" shall mean any state department, board, bureau, division, commission, committee, public authority, public corporation, council, office or other governmental entity performing a governmental or proprietary function of the state, except the judiciary or the state legislature.

3. The governor shall appoint a chief sustainability officer. Such chief sustainability officer shall accomplish the duties set forth in this section in an effort to advise and assist state agencies in an ongoing coordinated response to address climate change. Such chief sustainability officer shall receive a salary, to be fixed by the governor within the amounts appropriated therefor.

4. The chief sustainability officer shall:

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

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(a) Review rules and regulations of state agencies and submit proposed amendments and/or additions of such rules and regulations to such agencies for consideration that the officer shall deem appropriate or necessary to help mitigate negative impacts of climate change and promote climate sustainability;

(b) Coordinate policy to promote energy and environmental sustainability across state government operations, including the office of general services, the New York state energy research and development authority, the department of environmental conservation, and the department of state;

(c) Work with state agencies and departments to ensure effective implementation and achievement of statutory requirements and state goals related to energy and environmental protection;

(d) Coordinate implementation of programs and initiatives to improve state facility and vehicle fleet efficiency and promote adoption of energy efficient technologies and the modernization of state facilities and operations;

(e) Design and share with state agencies and departments strategies that can be used to leverage state facilities and assets to advance the conservation of natural resources and highlight best environmental, technological and policy strategies to reach the highest energy efficiency standards reasonably possible;

(f) Develop sustainable practices to plan for and mitigate enterprise risks while reducing waste and to help strengthen commercial, cultural, and political cooperation and engagement;

(g) Advise state agencies and departments in best practices for environmental regulatory compliance, reporting, partnerships and outreach, and environmental sustainability innovation;

(h) Assist the department of state in reducing its use of natural resources through improving energy and water efficiency, and providing data and tools that protect the health of the state government's personnel and employees and their families;

(i) Partner with private sector businesses, public and private universities, and government agencies to improve environmental sustainability across the state;

(j) Participate in inter-agency working groups that develop environmental requirements and guidance for state agencies;

(k) Act as a representative of New York state at the United States Climate Alliance and other national and international organizations focused on climate science and sustainability research and goals that the chief sustainability officer shall deem appropriate;

(l) Inform the governor, secretary, legislature, and state agencies and other governmental entities of the latest research and developments in the field of climate science;

(m) Advise and assist the New York state climate action council established pursuant to section 75-0103 of the environmental conservation law in such duties of such council that the chief sustainability officer shall deem appropriate; and

(n) Be the state's coordinator for the implementation of the climate leadership and community protection act.

5. All state agencies shall cooperate with the chief sustainability officer to ensure that the chief sustainability officer is able to fulfill the requirements under this section.

§ 2. This act shall take effect on the first of January next succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law.