

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:

1 Section 1. The education law is amended by adding a new section 239-d
2 to read as follows:

3 § 239-d. New York state violence in mass media research program. 1.
4 Program formation and goals. Subject to amounts available by appropri-
5 ation, the New York state violence in mass media research program is
6 hereby created within the firearm violence research institute. The
7 purposes of such program shall include:

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

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

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

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

25 (e) promoting awareness of existing and new sources of information
26 created by psychologists and other experts on the effects of current
27 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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1 governmental agencies, and the general public on these issues through
2 such means as it may determine;

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

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

6 (h) raising sensitivity to firearm violence concerns among state and
7 local government agencies, and serving as a forum for enhanced intera-
8 gency information sharing and cooperation;

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

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

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

21 2. Research. The New York state firearm violence research institute
22 shall foster, pursue, and sponsor basic, translational, and transform-
23 ative research, field studies, and all other such activities to
24 research:

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

30 (b) the individual, community, and societal consequences of potential-
31 ly irresponsible mass media reporting practices regarding violent crime;

32 (c) the prevention and treatment of mass public violence at the indi-
33 vidual, community, and societal levels; and

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

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

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

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

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