§ 7-a. Commission on increasing diversity in the state government workforce. 1. There is hereby established in the department an independent commission on increasing diversity in the state government workforce. Such commission shall not be subject to the supervision or control of the department, the commission or the president. The commission on increasing diversity in the state government workforce shall examine, evaluate and make recommendations concerning ways to increase the number of minority workers in state service.

2. The commission on increasing diversity in the state government workforce shall be composed of fifteen members, to be appointed as follows: nine members shall be appointed by the governor, three members shall be appointed by the temporary president of the senate, and three members shall be appointed by the speaker of the assembly. Of the nine members appointed by the governor, at least one member shall represent each of the following: the department, the office of employee relations, the governor's appointments office, a prominent civil rights organization representing blacks, a prominent civil rights organization representing Hispanics, and a prominent civil rights organization representing Asians. All the members appointed by the temporary president of the senate and the speaker of the assembly shall be representatives of a protected class as established by federal statutory or case law. Every member of the commission shall serve at the pleasure of the official who appointed him or her. The members shall be broadly representative of the geographic areas of the state and the diverse minority communities of the state. The governor shall designate the chair and vice-chair of the commission from among his or her appointees. Vacancies in the membership of the commission shall be filled in the manner provided for original appointments.

3. The commission on increasing diversity in the state government workforce:

(a) shall recommend ways in which to increase the number of minority workers in state service;

(b) shall study how to diversify the workforce in state service during the replacement of the existing workforce as it ages out and retires;

(c) shall review the diversity hiring practices of other states and

the federal government, including reviewing the Presidential Management Interim Program model for recruiting and advancing Hispanic and African-American college graduates, and recommend the best outcome practices;

(d) shall review and recommend changes to the existing hiring and promotion practices that will help diversify the workers in state service at all levels of service;

(e) shall review and recommend the means by which to best provide information to students and faculty at colleges and universities in the state on the employment and promotion opportunities in state service;

(f) shall review and recommend recruiting and employment practices that will bring Hispanics into jobs classified as shortage category occupations, as well as other occupations;

(g) shall review and recommend any flexibilities that exist in the state civil service system to bring minorities into jobs classified as shortage category occupations, as well as other occupations;

(h) shall review and recommend procedures that the department should take to develop and promote the participation of minority state employees in career development programs;

(i) may meet within and without the state, shall hold public hearings and shall have all the powers of a legislative committee pursuant to the legislative law;

(j) to the maximum extent feasible, shall be entitled to request and receive, and shall utilize and be provided with such facilities, resources and data of any court, department, division, board, bureau, commission or agency of the state as it may reasonably request to properly carry out its powers and duties pursuant to this section; and

(k) (1) shall, on or before April first, two thousand seven, report to the governor and the legislature its findings, conclusions and recommendations,

(2) shall, on or before April first, two thousand eight, report to the governor and the legislature on the status of and any actions taken on the recommendations made pursuant to subparagraph one of this paragraph, and

(3) shall, on or before April first, two thousand nine, report to the governor and the legislature on the status of and any actions taken on the recommendations made pursuant to subparagraph one of this paragraph,

and which actions have and have not been taken to provide for diversity in the state government workforce.

4. The members of the commission on increasing diversity in the state government workforce shall receive no compensation for their services, but shall be allowed their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties pursuant to this section.