

CHAPTER 445

AN ACT creating a Coordinating Committee on Youth and making an appropriation.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. a. There is established in the Department of State a Coordinating Committee on Youth. The committee shall have 34 members, including the following ex-officio members or designees: the Secretary of State; the Attorney General; the Executive Director of the Juvenile Justice Commission; the Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts; the Commissioner of Human Services; the Commissioner of Education; the Commissioner of Labor; the State Treasurer; the Commissioner of Corrections; the Commissioner of Agriculture; the Commissioner of Environmental Protection; the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services; the Commissioner of Personnel; the Commissioner of Transportation; the Commissioner of Banking and Insurance; the Commissioner of Community Affairs; the Adjutant General; the Executive Director of the Commission on Higher Education and the Chief Executive Officer and Secretary of the New Jersey Commerce and Economic Growth Commission. The committee also shall consist of 15 public members, five of whom shall be appointed by the Governor, five by the President of the Senate and five by the Speaker of the General Assembly as follows: representatives of youth serving organizations; religious organizations; the corporate and business community of the State; educational organizations; the news media; the television and motion picture industries; and persons who, by training or experience, have an interest in and knowledge of the problems and perspectives of youth; provided however, no more than three members shall be selected from any of those groups.

b. The public members shall serve for terms of three years, but of the public members first appointed, five shall serve a term of three years, five shall serve a term of two years and five shall serve a term of one year. Each member shall hold office for the term of appointment and until his successor is appointed and qualified. A member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring in the membership of the board for any reason other than the expiration of the term shall have a term of appointment for the unexpired term only. All vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. A member may be appointed for any number of successive terms.

c. The committee shall meet and organize immediately after appointment of the members. The Secretary of State shall serve as the chairperson and the committee shall elect from its membership a vice-chairperson.

d. Public members shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

e. The committee shall adopt rules for the transaction of its business and shall keep a record of its business, including a record of its resolutions, transactions, findings and determinations. A majority of the members of the committee shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number may hold a hearing.

f. The committee shall meet at least once in each quarter of the fiscal year, and as often thereafter as shall be deemed necessary by the chairperson.

g. By a two-thirds vote of the committee, a public member may be dismissed from membership for such reasons as the committee may establish, which reasons shall include lack of interest in committee duties or repeated absences from committee meetings.

h. The committee shall be administered by the Department of State. The department shall employ necessary staff to carry out the duties and functions of the committee as otherwise provided in this act or as otherwise provided by law. The committee also shall actively seek and solicit participation by the private sector in the operation and administration of its purposes and in effectuating the provisions of this act.

i. The committee shall expire on June 30, 2006; provided however, the Legislature may act to reconstitute the committee.

2. a. The committee shall have the powers and duties to:

(1) In consultation with the Juvenile Justice Commission, assess successful faith-based and nonprofit youth programs that currently exist, and encourage the replication of these model programs, and others that are based on non-violent resistance techniques, rehabilitation and restorative justice principles, throughout the State in targeted communities with above average

unemployment, substandard housing, high crime rates, above average high school dropout rates, high rates of teen pregnancy and higher than average numbers of juveniles incarcerated;

(2) Establish a Statewide Corporate-Business Youth Mentor Program by exploiting and coordinating resources with other State and private youth mentoring programs and networks to enable the local business community to participate in youth mentoring, and to demonstrate the value of honest work and legitimate employment;

(3) Organize an annual Statewide conference or regional conferences to institutionalize inter-relationships among groups and experts in various disciplines, including churches and clergy from all denominations, business leaders, housing advocacy groups, employers, financial institutions, juvenile justice and education specialists, to form partnerships to ensure that all youth receive the assistance needed to grow as productive individuals;

(4) Foster the creation and publication of public service advertisements and other program materials promoting personal responsibility and an environment free of violence, vandalism and victimization and also elucidating the distinctions between fictionalized violence and actual violence;

(5) Develop model youth grants initiatives that establish, support, expand or replicate those programs that promote the principles of non-violent resistance techniques, rehabilitation and restorative justice as well as youth-based leadership initiatives with missions to promote personal responsibility and an environment free of violence, vandalism and victimization in schools and communities; and

(6) Solicit, receive, and accept appropriations, gifts or donations from public or private sources for any of the purposes of the committee under this section.

b. The committee shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature detailing its accomplishments and including any recommendations it may have for legislation to be enacted to further promote programs of non-violent resistance, rehabilitation and restorative justice and youth leadership programs that promote personal responsibility and an environment free of violence, vandalism and victimization.

c. The Attorney General shall provide legal assistance to the committee.

3. There is appropriated \$50,000 from the General Fund to the Department of State for the Coordinating Committee on Youth

4. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved January 11, 2002.