

CHAPTER 94

AN ACT increasing the membership of the Amistad Commission and amending P.L.2002, c.75.

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

1. Section 2 of P.L.2002, c.75 (C.52:16A-87) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:16A-87 Amistad Commission established.

2. a. The Amistad Commission, so named in honor of the group of enslaved Africans led by Joseph Cinque who, while being transported in 1839 on a vessel named the Amistad, gained their freedom after overthrowing the crew and eventually having their case successfully argued before the United States Supreme Court, is created and established in the Executive Branch of the State Government. For the purposes of complying with the provisions of Article V, Section IV, paragraph 1 of the New Jersey Constitution, the commission is allocated within the Department of State.

The commission shall consist of 23 members, including the Secretary of State or a designee, the Commissioner of Education or a designee and the chair of the executive board of the Presidents' Council or a designee, serving ex officio, two members of the Senate, no more than one of whom shall be of the same political party, appointed by the President of the Senate to serve as non-voting members for the two-year legislative term during which they are appointed, two members of the General Assembly, no more than one of whom shall be of the same political party, appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly to serve as non-voting members for the two-year legislative term during which they are appointed, and 16 public members.

Public members shall be appointed as follows: four public members, no more than two of whom shall be of the same political party, shall be appointed by the President of the Senate; four public members, no more than two of whom shall be of the same political party, shall be appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly; and eight public members, no more than four of whom shall be of the same political party, shall be appointed by the Governor. The public members shall be residents of this State, chosen with due regard to broad geographic representation and ethnic diversity, who have an interest in the history of the African slave trade and slavery in America and the contributions of African-Americans to our society.

b. Each public member of the commission shall serve for a term of three years, except that of the initial members so appointed: one member appointed by the President of the Senate, one member appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, and two members appointed by the Governor shall serve for terms of one year; one member appointed by the President of the Senate, one member appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, and three members appointed by the Governor shall serve for terms of two years; and two members appointed by the President of the Senate, two members appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, and three members appointed by the Governor shall serve for terms of three years. Public members shall be eligible for reappointment. They shall serve until their successors are appointed and qualified, and the term of the successor of any incumbent shall be calculated from the expiration of the term of that incumbent. A vacancy occurring other than by expiration of term shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment but for the unexpired term only.

c. The members of the commission shall serve without compensation but shall be entitled to reimbursement for all necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

d. The Secretary of State, or a designee, shall serve as the chair and the Commissioner of Education, or a designee, shall serve as the vice-chair of the commission. The presence of a majority of the authorized membership of the commission shall be required for the conduct of official business.

e. The New Jersey Historical Commission shall serve as staff for the Amistad Commission. The New Jersey Historical Commission may, subject to the availability of appropriations, hire additional staff and consultants to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Amistad Commission.

f. The Department of Education shall:

(1) assist the Amistad Commission in marketing and distributing to educators, administrators and school districts in the State educational information and other materials on the African slave trade, slavery in America, the vestiges of slavery in this country and the contributions of

African-Americans to our society;

(2) conduct at least one teacher workshop annually on the African slave trade, slavery in America, the vestiges of slavery in this country and the contributions of African-Americans to our society;

(3) assist the Amistad Commission in monitoring the inclusion of such materials and curricula in the State's educational system; and

(4) consult with the Amistad Commission to determine ways it may survey, catalog, and extend slave trade and American slavery education presently being incorporated into the Core Curriculum Content Standards and taught in the State's educational system.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved July 9, 2004.