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SYNOPSIS
Establishes “COVID-19 Frontline and Healthcare Worker Memorial Commission.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
As reported by the Assembly State and Local Government Committee on March 17, 2022, with amendments.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/24/2022)
AN ACT establishing the “COVID-19 Frontline [and] Healthcare Worker Memorial Commission.”

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

1. The Legislature finds and declares that the coronavirus disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) pandemic has exacted a terrible toll on the global community, the country, and this State. This global pandemic has claimed over a million lives worldwide, including the lives of frontline healthcare workers who have displayed tremendous courage and dedication in their efforts to treat patients affected by the coronavirus disease 2019 COVID-19. Many of these healthcare workers, from all different healthcare fields including those working in police and fire departments, rose above their usual scope of duties to combat multiple surges in the number of cases of coronavirus disease 2019 COVID-19, often with limited healthcare resources. As one of the early epicenters of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important for this State to memorialize the tragic consequences of the pandemic and recognize the immense loss of life suffered by this State.

The Legislature therefore determines that it is fitting and proper to establish a commission to be known as the COVID-19 Frontline Healthcare Worker Memorial Commission to design and oversee the construction of a memorial dedicated to the healthcare workers who lost their lives treating and supporting patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. a. There is established [.] in but not of the Department of State, a commission known to be as the “COVID-19 Frontline Healthcare Worker Memorial Commission [.] [for the purposes of honoring and recognizing] The purpose of the commission shall be to design and oversee the construction of a memorial that honors and recognizes the frontline healthcare workers who lost their lives in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.
Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:
1Assembly ASL committee amendments adopted March 17, 2022.
b. The commission shall consist of nine public members, who shall be residents of the State and representative of frontline and healthcare workers, including frontline and healthcare workers in police and fire departments, individuals with knowledge in erecting monuments or other general experience in construction or architecture, individuals with experience in grant funding or in business administration; and any other expertise as determined by the Governor. The Speaker of the General Assembly, the Senate President, and the Governor shall each appoint three public members to the commission, shall appoint three members to the commission upon recommendation of the Speaker of the General Assembly, and shall appoint three members to the commission upon recommendation of the President of the Senate.

c. Any vacancy in the membership of the commission shall be filled in the same manner as is provided for the original appointments are made.

d. The members of the commission shall serve without compensation.

e. The commission shall organize as soon as may be practicable after the appointment of a majority of its members and shall elect from among its members a chairperson. The presence of five members of the commission shall constitute a quorum.

f. The commission shall meet regularly as the commission determines, or at least twice per year at times and places determined by the commission, as well as at the call of the chairperson or a majority of commission’s membership.

g. All meetings of the commission shall be open to the public. Agendas, minutes, documents, and testimony from all meetings shall be posted by the commission on the webpage established for the commission, a link to which shall be posted on the Department of State’s Internet website.

h. The commission may request the assistance and services of the employees of any State, county or municipal department, board, bureau, commission, task force or agency as it may require and as may be available to it for its purposes. The commission may, subject to available funds, hire staff as are necessary to effectuate the purposes of this act, including appropriate clerical and administrative staff. The commission shall hire at least one individual to provide clerical support to the commission.

3. a. The commission shall select a suitable design and location for the construction of a memorial dedicated to the frontline and healthcare workers that lost their lives in the coronavirus disease 2019 during the COVID-19 pandemic and shall determine appropriate methods of financing the construction
and maintenance of the memorial. Following the selection of a design and specific location for the memorial and the receipt of sufficient funding, the commission shall oversee the construction of the memorial.

b. The commission may initiate fundraising measures and may receive monetary donations for the design, construction, and maintenance of the memorial. Any money received by the commission for these purposes shall be deposited in the fund established by pursuant to section 4 of this act.

Not later than 18 months following the effective date of this act, the commission shall prepare and submit a final report to the Governor and pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), a final report, which shall include the final design selected for the memorial, the exact location selected for the memorial, and the amount of funding necessary for construction and maintenance of the memorial.

4. There is established in the Department of the Treasury a non-lapsing fund to be known as the “COVID-19 Frontline Healthcare Worker Memorial Fund.” The fund shall be credited with any moneys received by the COVID-19 Frontline Healthcare Worker Memorial Commission as donations pursuant to subsection b. of section 3 of this act and any moneys as may thereafter be donated or appropriated to the fund. All interest earned on moneys in the fund shall be credited to the fund. The moneys in the fund shall be administered by the State Treasurer and held in the fund until appropriated by law. No later than one year following the effective date of this act, and annually thereafter, the State Treasurer shall certify to the Governor, the Legislature and the Commissioner of Environmental Protection the total amount of moneys in the fund.

5. The act shall take effect immediately and sections 1 through 3 of this act shall expire on the first day of the sixth month following the completion of the memorial, except for section 4, which shall remain in effect COVID-19 Frontline and Healthcare Worker Memorial.