

[First Reprint]

**ASSEMBLY, No. 4343**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**221st LEGISLATURE**

INTRODUCED MAY 10, 2024

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywoman SHANIQUE SPEIGHT**

**District 29 (Essex and Hudson)**

**Assemblyman REGINALD W. ATKINS**

**District 20 (Union)**

**Assemblyman MICHAEL VENEZIA**

**District 34 (Essex)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

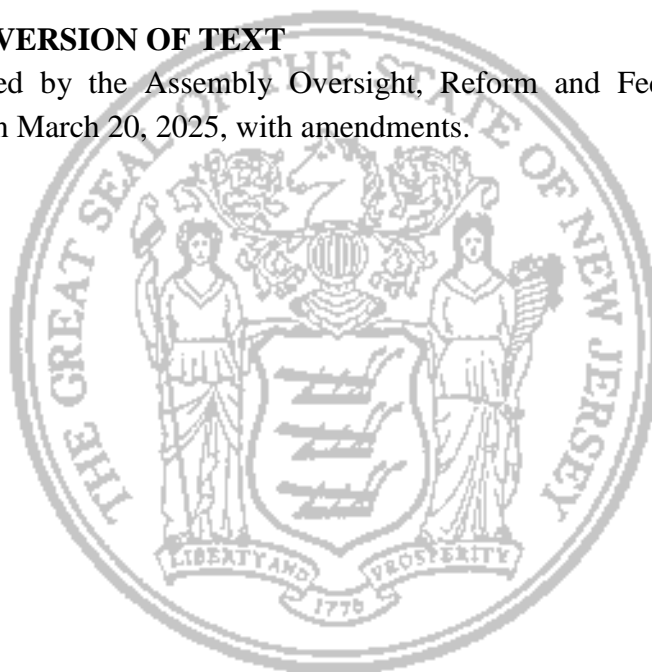
**Assemblywomen Quijano, Reynolds-Jackson, Peterpaul, Donlon, Morales  
and Bagolie**

**SYNOPSIS**

Establishes New Jersey-Haiti Commission.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As reported by the Assembly Oversight, Reform and Federal Relations  
Committee on March 20, 2025, with amendments.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/24/2025)**

1 AN ACT establishing the New Jersey-Haiti Commission and  
2 supplementing chapter 18A of Title 52.

3

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

6

7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

8 The State of New Jersey recognizes its historical ties with Haiti  
9 and economic concerns shared by its Haitian-American residents  
10 regarding the Republic of Haiti;

11 Haiti has faced significant challenges, including natural  
12 disasters, political instability, and socio-economic hardships;

13 It is imperative for New Jersey to recognize that it has the 4th  
14 largest Haitian population in the United States; and

15 The State should take concrete steps to address the economic  
16 challenges within its Haitian-American community and should work  
17 diligently to foster a mutual and beneficial relationship with Haiti.

18

19 2. a. The New Jersey-Haiti Commission is hereby created and  
20 established in the Department of State. The commission shall  
21 advise the Governor and Legislature on ways to improve economic  
22 and cultural links between the State and Haiti and on steps that may  
23 be taken to address the economic challenges within the State's  
24 Haitian-American community.

25 b. The commission shall consist of 13 members, including the  
26 Secretary of State, or a designee, who shall serve as chairperson,  
27 and 12 public members who shall represent a variety of different  
28 professional sectors across the State, including non-profit  
29 organizations serving the Haitian community. The public members  
30 shall be appointed <sup>1</sup>**by the Governor**<sup>1</sup> as follows: <sup>1</sup>**four**<sup>1</sup> six  
31 public members shall be appointed by the Governor; two<sup>1</sup> public  
32 members shall be appointed by the Governor<sup>1</sup> upon the  
33 recommendation of the President of the Senate, <sup>1</sup>**four**<sup>1</sup> one<sup>1</sup> public  
34 <sup>1</sup>**members**<sup>1</sup> member<sup>1</sup> shall be appointed by the Governor<sup>1</sup> upon  
35 the recommendation of the Minority Leader of the Senate; <sup>1</sup>**four**<sup>1</sup>  
36 two<sup>1</sup> public members shall be appointed by the Governor<sup>1</sup> upon the  
37 recommendation of the Speaker of the General Assembly, and  
38 <sup>1</sup>**four**<sup>1</sup> one<sup>1</sup> public <sup>1</sup>**members**<sup>1</sup> member<sup>1</sup> shall be appointed by  
39 the Governor<sup>1</sup> upon the recommendation of the Minority Leader of  
40 the General Assembly.

41 c. Each public member of the commission shall serve for a term  
42 of three years, except that of the members first appointed, four shall  
43 be appointed to a term of one year, four shall be appointed to a term  
44 of two years, and four shall be appointed to a term of three years, as

**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:

<sup>1</sup>Assembly AOF committee amendments adopted March 20, 2025.

1 determined by the Governor. Public members shall be eligible for  
2 reappointment. The public members shall serve until their  
3 successors are appointed and qualified, and the term of the  
4 successor of any incumbent shall be calculated from the expiration  
5 of the term of that incumbent. A vacancy occurring other than the  
6 expiration of the term shall be filled in the same manner as the  
7 original appointment but for the unexpired term only.

8 d. The members of the commission shall serve without  
9 compensation, but shall be entitled to reimbursement for all  
10 necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties  
11 within the limits of funds appropriated for that purpose.

12 e. The commission shall hold at least one public hearing on a  
13 quarterly basis and shall consult with stakeholders, experts, and  
14 members of the public to gather information related to the current  
15 economic challenges of the Haitian-American community in New  
16 Jersey and on the economic and cultural links between the State and  
17 Haiti.

18

19 3. a. The commission shall:

20 conduct a comprehensive review of historical ties between New  
21 Jersey and Haiti, including existing cultural exchanges, economic  
22 interactions, and the number of Haitians settling in New Jersey, as  
23 well as their patterns of migration to the State;

24 collect and analyze quantitative data, including census numbers,  
25 demographic trends, and economic indicators, to assess the current  
26 state of affairs in the Haitian-American community as related to  
27 civic engagement and their political and economic impacts in New  
28 Jersey, and how the State can assist the Haitian-American  
29 community within the State;

30 analyze ways for New Jersey to establish a strong partnership  
31 and bilateral cooperation with Haiti, including but not limited to,  
32 providing logistical and technical assistance related to access to  
33 healthcare, education, and access to a fair and impartial judicial  
34 system;

35 identify areas for economic collaboration, and partnership  
36 between New Jersey and Haiti, including but not limited to, trade  
37 promotions, investment opportunities, and cultural exchanges; and

38 recommend policy initiatives, legislation, and programs to  
39 support economic development efforts in the Haitian-American  
40 community in this State and to support economic and cultural links  
41 in Haiti.

42 b. The commission may authorize studies, reports, and research  
43 projects to further its objectives and consult with State agencies, the  
44 Haitian government, and international and local organizations  
45 working on political, economic, and cultural issues related to Haiti.

46 c. The commission shall report its findings and  
47 recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature pursuant to

1 section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1) no later than one year  
2 after the date the commission first meets and annually thereafter.

3 d. The commission, through the Department of State, may  
4 solicit and receive grants and other funds that are made available  
5 for the commission's purposes by any governmental, public,  
6 private, not-for-profit, or for-profit entity, including funds that are  
7 made available under any federal or State law, regulation, or  
8 program.

9  
10 4. This act shall take effect immediately.