

[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 3199

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 9, 2024

Sponsored by:

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District 34 (Essex)

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SYNOPSIS

Establishes New Jersey-Haiti Commission.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Senate State Government, Wagering, Tourism & Historic Preservation Committee on October 24, 2024, with amendments.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/30/2025)

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 advise
 21 the Governor and Legislature on ways to improve economic and
 22 cultural links between the State and Haiti and on steps that may be
 23 taken to address the economic challenges within the State's Haitian-
 24 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, and
 27 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 ¹**by the Governor**¹ as follows: ¹**four** six public
 31 members shall be appointed by the Governor; ¹two¹ public members
 32 shall be appointed ¹by the Governor¹ upon the recommendation of the
 33 President of the Senate, ¹**four** one¹ public ¹**members** member¹
 34 shall be appointed ¹by the Governor¹ upon the recommendation of the
 35 Minority Leader of the Senate; ¹**four** two¹ public members shall be
 36 appointed ¹by the Governor¹ upon the recommendation of the Speaker
 37 of the General Assembly, and ¹**four** one¹ public ¹**members** member¹
 38 shall be appointed ¹by the Governor¹ upon the
 39 recommendation of the Minority Leader of the General Assembly.

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

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:

¹Senate SSG committee amendments adopted October 24, 2024.

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

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

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

17

18 3. a. The commission shall:

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

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

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

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

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

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

45 c. The commission shall report its findings and
46 recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature pursuant to
47 section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1) no later than one year
48 after the date the commission first meets and annually thereafter.

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

7

8 4. This act shall take effect immediately.