

ASSEMBLY, No. 5580

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 222nd LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 5, 2026

Sponsored by:

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SYNOPSIS

Expands duty of Commission on Human Trafficking to include studying connection between human trafficking and illicit massage parlor businesses.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/15/2026)

1 AN ACT concerning human trafficking and amending and
2 supplementing P.L.2013, c.51.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6
7 1. (New section) The Legislature finds and declares that:

8 a. The Polaris Project issued a report in 2018 entitled “Human
9 Trafficking in Illicit Massage Businesses.”

10 b. Information for the report was gathered from various sources
11 including published reports, law enforcement, interviews with
12 victims and cases reported to the National Human Trafficking
13 Hotline;

14 c. New Jersey has proximity to New York and the I-95 corridor
15 which runs along the Eastern Seaboard and may be a thoroughfare
16 for moving trafficking victims;

17 d. Press reports indicate the Polaris Project has identified
18 allegedly illegal massage parlors offering sexual services in this
19 State;

20 e. New Jersey has an existing commission known as the
21 Commission on Human Trafficking which is created in the Division
22 of Criminal Justice in the Department of Law and Public Safety;

23 f. It is fitting and appropriate to charge this body with further
24 study on this issue within New Jersey.

25

26 2. Section 1 of P.L. 2013, c.51 (C.52:17B-237) is amended to
27 read as follows:

28 1. a. There is hereby created, in the Division of Criminal Justice
29 in the Department of Law and Public Safety, a commission to be
30 known as the Commission on Human Trafficking, consisting of 17
31 members as follows: the Attorney General, or the Attorney
32 General's designee; the Commissioner of Children and Families, or
33 the commissioner's designee; the Commissioner of Human Services,
34 or the commissioner's designee; a county prosecutor, appointed by
35 the Governor based upon the recommendation of the County
36 Prosecutors Association of the State of New Jersey; one member of
37 the New Jersey Human Trafficking Task Force established within
38 the Department of Law and Public Safety, designated by the
39 Attorney General; the Executive Director of the Division of
40 Violence Intervention and Victim Assistance or the executive
41 director's designee; two public members appointed by the Governor
42 based upon the recommendation of the Senate President, one
43 representing law enforcement and one representing a victim's
44 assistance organization; one public member appointed by the
45 Governor based upon the recommendation of the Senate Minority

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.

1 Leader representing either a non-profit health care facility or mental
2 health services; two public members appointed by the Governor
3 based upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the General
4 Assembly, one representing law enforcement and one representing a
5 victim's assistance organization; one public member appointed by
6 the Governor based upon the recommendation of the Assembly
7 Minority Leader representing either a non-profit health care facility
8 or mental health services; and five public members appointed by the
9 Governor, one of whom shall be a representative of a child
10 advocacy organization concerning missing, abducted, or exploited
11 children, and one of whom shall be a human trafficking survivor.
12 All public members shall have experience with, possess a
13 background in, or demonstrate a specialized knowledge of, the
14 legal, policy, educational, social, or psychological aspects of human
15 trafficking.

16 b. (1) Of the public members first appointed:

17 (a) the following shall serve for a term of three years: one
18 member appointed upon the recommendation of the Senate
19 President; one member appointed upon the recommendation of the
20 Speaker of the General Assembly; and two members appointed by
21 the Governor; and

22 (b) the following shall serve for a term of two years: one member
23 appointed upon the recommendation of the Senate President; one
24 member appointed upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the
25 General Assembly; each member appointed upon the
26 recommendation of the Senate and Assembly Minority Leaders; and
27 three members appointed by the Governor.

28 (c) Upon the conclusion of the initial terms, each public member
29 shall be appointed for a term of three years.

30 (2) Each member appointed shall hold office for the term of
31 appointment and until a successor shall have been appointed and
32 qualified.

33 (3) Any vacancy in the membership of the commission shall be
34 filled by appointment in the same manner as the original
35 appointment was made.

36 c. (1) The commission shall organize upon the appointment of a
37 majority of its authorized membership. The members shall elect
38 one of the members to serve as chair and vice-chair, and the chair
39 may appoint a secretary, who need not be a member of the
40 commission.

41 (2) The commission shall meet at those times and places within
42 the State of New Jersey as the commission shall determine. A
43 majority of the commission's authorized membership shall
44 constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business, for the
45 performance of any duty, or for the exercise of any power of the
46 commission.

47 d. The members of the commission shall serve without
48 compensation, but shall be eligible for reimbursement for necessary

1 and reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their
2 official duties within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise
3 made available to the commission for its purposes.

4 e. The Division of Criminal Justice in the Department of Law
5 and Public Safety shall, at the direction of the Attorney General,
6 provide legal, stenographic, technical, clerical, and other staff and
7 resource assistance to the commission, and additionally the
8 commission may incur expenses as may be necessary in order to
9 perform its duties within the limits of funds appropriated or
10 otherwise made available to it for its purposes.

11 f. It shall be the duty of the commission to:

12 (1) Evaluate the existing law concerning human trafficking and
13 the enforcement thereof, study the connection between human
14 trafficking and illicit massage parlor businesses, and to make
15 recommendations for legislation, if appropriate;

16 (2) Review existing victim assistance programs and analyze the
17 costs, organization, and availability of these services for victims of
18 human trafficking and to make recommendations for legislation, if
19 appropriate;

20 (3) Promote a coordinated response by public and private
21 resources for victims of human trafficking; and

22 (4) Develop mechanisms to promote public awareness of human
23 trafficking, victim remedies and services, and trafficking prevention
24 including the creation of a public awareness sign promoting the
25 national, 24-hour toll-free hotline telephone service on human
26 trafficking described under section 18 of P.L.2013, c.51 (C.2C:13-
27 11), and the promotion of training courses and other educational
28 materials for use by persons required under section 19 of P.L.2013,
29 c.51 (C.2C:13-12) to undergo training on the handling of and
30 response procedures for suspected human trafficking activities.

31 g. The commission shall report annually to the Governor and to
32 the Legislature, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-
33 19.1), its activities, as well as its findings and recommendations for
34 any needed new services or resources for victims of human
35 trafficking, and any proposed changes to the current law concerning
36 human trafficking.

37 (cf: P.L.2023, c.167, s.14)

38
39 3. This act shall take effect immediately.
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42 STATEMENT

43
44 This bill would expand the duty of the Commission on Human
45 Trafficking, created by P.L.2013, c.51, to include studying the
46 connection between human trafficking and illicit massage parlor
47 businesses. A published report by the Polaris Project, a group
48 advocating on behalf of trafficking victims, indicates that massage

- 1 parlors, including legitimate ones, may be contributing significantly
- 2 to human trafficking trade in New Jersey.