

Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission

Sec. 143. Section 2-120 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

- a) There is established a Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission.
- b) On and after the effective date of this section, the commission shall consist of twenty-one members.
 1. With respect to members appointed prior to the effective date of this section, upon the occurrence of a vacancy or the expiration of the term of a member, whichever occurs first, such vacancy shall be filled as follows: (A) If the Governor appointed the member, such vacancy shall be filled by a joint appointment of the president pro tempore of the Senate and the speaker of the House of Representatives; (B) if the president pro tempore of the Senate appointed the member, such vacancy shall be filled by an appointment of the president pro tempore of the Senate; (C) if the majority leader of the Senate appointed the member, such vacancy shall be filled by an appointment of the majority leader of the Senate; (D) if the minority leader of the Senate appointed the member, such vacancy shall be filled by an appointment of the minority leader of the Senate; (E) if the speaker of the House of Representatives appointed the member, such vacancy shall be filled by an appointment of the speaker of the House of Representatives; (F) if the majority leader of the House of Representatives appointed the member, such vacancy shall be filled by an appointment of the majority leader of the House of Representatives; and (G) if the minority leader of the House of Representatives appointed the member, such vacancy shall be filled by an appointment of the minority leader of the House of Representatives.
 2. On or after the effective date of this section, eight additional members shall be appointed as follows: (A) The president pro tempore of the Senate shall appoint one member from Windham County; (B) the majority leader of the Senate shall appoint two members, one from New Haven County and one from Litchfield County; (C) the minority leader of the Senate shall appoint one member from Fairfield County; (D) the speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint one member from Middlesex County; (E) the majority leader of the House of Representatives shall appoint two members, one from Tolland County and one from Hartford County; and (F) the minority leader of the House of Representatives shall appoint one member from New London County. In the event of a vacancy for any member appointed pursuant to this subdivision, such vacancy shall be

- filled by the appointing authority and such appointment shall be from the respective county.
3. Any member appointed on or after the effective date of this section shall have experience in the field of Latino and Puerto Rican affairs by virtue of such person's status as an advocate or an academic, civic or cultural leader.
 4. Any member appointed pursuant to this subsection shall serve for a term of two years from February first in the year of their appointment. The commission shall elect a chairperson and a vice-chairperson from among its members who shall each serve in such capacity for a period of two years. Any person absent from (A) three consecutive meetings of the commission, or (B) fifty per cent of such meetings during any calendar year shall be deemed to have resigned from the commission, effective immediately.
 5. Vacancies on the commission shall be filled by the appointing authority. Members of the commission shall serve without compensation but shall, within the limits of available funds, be reimbursed for expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of their duties. The commission shall meet as often as deemed necessary by the chairperson or a majority of the commission.

c) The commission shall:

1. Focus its efforts on the following quality of life desired results for the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state: (A) That all members of the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state are healthy; (B) that all members of the Latino and Puerto Rican population are safe; (C) that all members of the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state achieve educational success; (D) that all members of the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state are economically self-sufficient; and (E) that all members of the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state are free from discrimination. The commission shall meet regularly to review matters pertaining to the achievement of the desired results described in subparagraphs (A) to (E), inclusive, of this subdivision and, not later than January first, annually, shall submit a status report concerning such desired results to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of appropriations. The commission shall develop (i) appropriate population-level indicators of the state's progress in achieving such desired results, and (ii) strategies that are intended to improve progress on such indicators through a process that is inclusive of all relevant partners, including, but not limited to, state and local government agencies, the faith community, the business sector, nonprofit organizations, advocacy groups and philanthropic organizations;

2. Make recommendations to the General Assembly and the Governor for new or enhanced policies, programs and services that will foster progress in achieving the desired results described in subdivision (1) of this subsection;
 3. Review and comment on any proposed state legislation or recommendations that may affect the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state and provide copies of any such comments to members of the General Assembly;
 4. Advise the General Assembly and Governor concerning the coordination and administration of state programs that affect the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state;
 5. Gather and maintain current information regarding the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state that can be used to better understand the status, condition and contributions of such Latino and Puerto Rican population. Such information shall be included in the annual report described in subsection (d) of this section and shall be made available to legislators and other interested parties upon request;
 6. Maintain a liaison between the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state and government agencies, including the General Assembly; and
 7. Conduct educational and outreach activities intended to raise awareness of critical issues for the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state.
- d) Not later than January first, annually, in accordance with section 11-4a the commission shall submit a report to the General Assembly that: (1) Identifies the quality of life desired results described in subdivision (1) of subsection (c) of this section, (2) displays current trend data for the indicators related to each such desired result area, (3) identifies barriers to progress on such indicators, (4) identifies strategies developed pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (c) of this section, and (5) describes performance measures for the commission, including measures of research, education and outreach, and partnership development.
- e) In carrying out its responsibility to make recommendations to the General Assembly and the Governor on the need for legislation, policies, programs or services to improve the quality of life for members of the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state, the commission shall have the assistance of staff, as described in subsection (g) of this section. Any such recommendations shall be provided solely with the approval of a majority of the members of the commission. A majority of the members of the commission shall be required to approve any specific advocacy before the General Assembly or any state agency.

- f) The commission may: (1) Request, and shall receive, from any state agency such information and assistance as the commission may require; (2) use such funds as may be available from federal, state or other sources and may enter into contracts to carry out the purposes of this section; (3) utilize voluntary and uncompensated services of individuals, state or federal agencies and organizations as may, from time to time, be offered and needed; (4) recommend policies to federal agencies and political subdivisions of the state relative to the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state; (5) accept any gift, donation or bequest for the purpose of performing the duties described in subsection (c) of this section; (6) hold public hearings; (7) establish task forces, as necessary, to perform the duties described in subsection (c) of this section; (8) adopt regulations, in accordance with chapter 54, as it may deem necessary to carry out the duties described in subsection (c) of this section; and (9) inform leaders of business, education, state and local governments and the communications media of the nature and scope of the problems faced by the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state, with a view to enlisting such persons' support in working toward solving such problems.
- g) There shall be an executive director of the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission. The executive director and any necessary staff shall be employed by the Joint Standing Committee on Legislative Management. The commission shall have no authority over staffing or personnel matters.
- h) The commission shall be part of the Legislative Department.
- i) The commission may enter into any agreement with a state agency for the purpose of maximizing the receipt of federal funds by such state agency, provided such state agency shall utilize any federal funds received as a result of such agreement to perform those statutory duties of such agency that relate to such commission's duties. The commission may accept that portion of federal funds received by any such state agency as a result of any such agreement which federal law otherwise permits to be received by such commission.