



**House Bill No. 5321**

**Public Act No. 08-166**

**AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2009*) (a) There is established an Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission. The commission shall consist of thirteen members, appointed as follows: (1) Three by the Governor, one of whom shall serve for a term of one year from July 1, 2009, and have expertise in the field of education, one of whom shall serve for a term of two years from July 1, 2009, and have expertise in the field of human services, and one of whom shall serve for a term of three years from July 1, 2009, and have expertise in the fields of small business and economic development, and each of whom thereafter shall serve for terms of three years from July first in the year of their appointment and have expertise in the field of the member's predecessor; (2) two by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of whom shall have expertise in the field of children and youth development and one of whom shall have expertise in the field of health; (3) one by the majority leader of the Senate, who shall be a member of the public; (4) two by the minority leader of the Senate, one of whom shall have expertise in the field of environment and one of whom shall have expertise in the field of arts and culture; (5) two by the speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall have

**House Bill No. 5321**

expertise in the field of housing and one of whom shall have expertise in the field of public safety; (6) one by the majority leader of the House of Representatives, who shall be a member of the public; and (7) two by the minority leader of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall have expertise in the field of transportation and one of whom shall be a member of the public. All members appointed under this subsection shall have experience in the field of Asian Pacific American affairs. All members appointed under subdivision (2), (3), (4), (5), (6) or (7) of this subsection shall serve for terms of two years from July first in the year of their appointment. The commission shall elect a chairperson and a vice-chairperson from among its members. 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. 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.

(b) The commission, within available appropriations, shall:

(1) Develop a plan prior to the beginning of each legislative session that outlines the commission's priorities for the session and strategies to accomplish each priority;

(2) Work in consultation with the respective state agency to develop plans and programs that address each of the following areas as they affect the Asian Pacific American community including, but not limited to: (A) Access to health care, (B) housing, (C) job training, (D) access to the legal system, (E) mental health and addiction services, (F) economic development, (G) workplace justice and equality, (H) immigration, (I) education, (J) English language instruction, (K)

**House Bill No. 5321**

international trade, and (L) economic cooperation with Asian countries;

(3) In consultation with the joint committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to legislative management, establish a plan of short-term and long-term initiatives based on the needs of the community of Asian Pacific descent;

(4) Review, comment and testify on any proposed state legislation and regulations that would affect the Asian Pacific American population in the state;

(5) Advise and provide information to the Governor and the General Assembly on the state's policies concerning the Asian Pacific American communities;

(6) Advise the Governor and the General Assembly concerning the coordination and administration of state programs serving the Asian Pacific American population;

(7) Maintain a liaison between the Asian Pacific American communities and governmental entities, including, but not limited to, the General Assembly;

(8) Promote the political empowerment of the Asian Pacific American community through voter registration, voting rights and citizenship training;

(9) Support the state's efforts to develop international trade and cross-border economic cooperation with the countries of Asia and the Pacific Rim;

(10) Support state efforts to develop effective foreign language and cultural programs for educational and economic development purposes;

**House Bill No. 5321**

(11) Encourage Asian Pacific American representation at all levels of state government, including state boards and commissions, and support the development of such representatives in addition to maintaining an accessible list of prospective appointees who are members of the Asian Pacific American community;

(12) Secure appropriate recognition of the accomplishments and contributions of the Asian Pacific American population of the state; and

(13) Prepare and submit to the Governor and General Assembly an annual report concerning its activities with any appropriate recommendations concerning the Asian Pacific American population of the state.

(c) The commission may 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.

(d) The commission may, subject to the provisions of chapter 67 of the general statutes, employ any necessary staff within available appropriations.

(e) The commission shall be part of the Legislative Department.

Approved June 12, 2008