

AN ACT

RELATING TO AFRICAN AMERICANS; CREATING THE COMMISSION ON AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS; CREATING AN OFFICE; PRESCRIBING POWERS AND DUTIES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

Section 1. SHORT TITLE.--This act may be cited as the "African American Affairs Act".

Section 2. DEFINITIONS.--As used in the African American Affairs Act:

A. "commission" means the commission on African American affairs;

B. "fund" means the office on African American affairs fund; and

C. "office" means the office on African American affairs.

Section 3. COMMISSION CREATED--MEMBERSHIP--TERMS--COMPENSATION--MEETINGS.--

A. The "commission on African American affairs" is created. The commission shall consist of nine members appointed by the governor to represent all fields of interest to African Americans. Members shall be appointed for staggered terms. Of the initial board, the terms of three members expire June 30, 2000, the terms of three members expire June 30, 2001 and the terms of three members expire

June 30, 2002; thereafter, appointments shall be for terms of three years made in such manner that the terms of three members expire on June 30 of each year. Members shall be appointed so as to represent all areas of the state. No more than five members shall belong to any one political party.

B. A majority of the commission's members constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business. The governor shall designate a chairman and vice chairman from among the membership. The commission may elect other officers as it deems necessary.

C. The commission shall meet as often as it deems necessary, but at least quarterly. Meetings shall be held at the call of the chairman or a majority of the commission.

D. Members of the commission may be reimbursed as nonsalaried public officials as provided in the Per Diem and Mileage Act and shall receive no other compensation, perquisite or allowance.

Section 4. COMMISSION--POWERS AND DUTIES.--

A. The commission shall:

(1) study issues important to African Americans, including history and culture; education, scholarships and other financial assistance for education and career development; economic and social problems and issues such as jobs, housing, discrimination, family support, youth idleness and crime; and health care, maternal and child

health, teen pregnancy, access and other health issues;

(2) secure recognition of African Americans' accomplishments and contributions to New Mexico and the United States;

(3) cooperate with and assist public and private entities dealing with issues important to African Americans;

(4) direct the operations of the office; and

(5) otherwise act as an advocate for African American citizens of New Mexico.

B. The commission may:

(1) conduct periodic conferences throughout the state to inform African Americans of the opportunities available to them through state and private sources, to encourage them to share their history and culture with other New Mexicans and participate in the social and political processes of their communities and to learn from conference participants their needs and problems; and

(2) perform such other actions as necessary to carry out its powers and duties pursuant to the African American Affairs Act.

Section 5. OFFICE CREATED--POWERS AND DUTIES.--

A. The "office on African American affairs" is created. The office shall carry out the directions of the commission.

B. The commission shall appoint a director, who shall work at the pleasure of the commission. The director, with the advice of the commission, shall employ other necessary employees, who shall be subject to the provisions of the Personnel Act.

C. The office shall:

(1) act as a clearinghouse for information important to the African American community;

(2) function as the coordinating office for all services and activities of state agencies and programs pertaining to African Americans;

(3) encourage funding and implementation of training programs and other opportunities for African Americans;

(4) promote and develop programs about community resources designed to meet the needs of African Americans;

(5) serve as staff for the commission;

(6) prepare and submit a budget for the office and commission; and

(7) publish an annual report on the activities and services of the office and commission.

D. The office may:

(1) adopt and promulgate rules in accordance with the State Rules Act to carry out the duties of the

office and the commission;

(2) accept gifts, grants, donations, bequests and devises from any source to be used to carry out its duties; and

(3) enter into contracts.

Section 6. FUND CREATED--ADMINISTRATION.--The "office on African American affairs fund" is created in the state treasury. The fund shall consist of appropriations, gifts, grants, donations and bequests. Money in the fund at the end of any fiscal year shall not revert. The fund shall be administered by the office, and disbursements from the fund shall be made on warrant drawn by the secretary of finance and administration pursuant to vouchers signed by the director of the office or his authorized representative. Expenditures of general fund and other state fund appropriations shall be subject to appropriation by the legislature and pursuant to a budget approved by the state budget division of the department of finance and administration.

Section 7. EFFECTIVE DATE.--The effective date of the provisions of this act is July 1, 2000. _____