



SENATE BILL No. 10

January 13, 1993, Introduced by Senator DI NELLO and referred to the Committee on State Affairs and Military/Veteran Affairs.

A bill to create an Italian American affairs commission and an office of Italian American affairs; to prescribe the powers and duties of the commission and office; and to prescribe the powers and duties of certain state agencies, departments, and officials.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the
2 "Italian American affairs commission act".

3 Sec. 2. As used in this act:

4 (a) "Commission" means the Italian American affairs commis-
5 sion created in section 3.

6 (b) "Department" means the department of civil rights.

7 (c) "Director" means the director of the office of Italian
8 American affairs.

1 (d) "Italian American" means an individual who has origins
2 in any of the original peoples of Italy.

3 (e) "Office" means the office of Italian American affairs
4 created in section 11.

5 Sec. 3. (1) An Italian American affairs commission is cre-
6 ated in the department. The commission shall exercise its powers
7 and duties independently of the department except for budget,
8 procurement, and housekeeping functions. The commission shall
9 consist of 15 members appointed by the governor with the advice
10 and consent of the senate. Five appointees shall be appointed
11 from a list of 5 or more nominees presented to the governor by
12 the senate majority leader, and 5 appointees shall be appointed
13 from a list of 5 or more nominees presented to the governor by
14 the speaker of the house of representatives. The commission
15 biannually shall elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson, and
16 shall elect other officers from its members as it considers
17 advisable.

18 (2) Except for initial members, a member of the commission
19 shall serve for a term of 3 years or until a successor is
20 appointed. Of the members initially appointed, 5 of the members
21 shall be appointed for a term of 3 years, 5 of the members shall
22 be appointed for a term of 2 years, and 5 of the members shall be
23 appointed for a term of 1 year. A vacancy on the commission
24 shall be filled by the governor for the balance of the unexpired
25 term. The governor shall consider recommendations made by the
26 commission to fill a vacancy on the commission.

1 (3) The commission shall be appointed within 90 days after
2 the effective date of this act.

3 Sec. 5. (1) Within 90 days after appointment and confirma-
4 tion of all members, the commission shall adopt bylaws for the
5 operation of the commission. At a minimum, the bylaws shall
6 include voting procedures and minimum requirements for attendance
7 at meetings.

8 (2) The commission shall hold regular quarterly meetings at
9 places and on dates fixed by the commission. Special meetings
10 may be called by the chairperson or by not less than 8 commission
11 members on 3 days' actual notice.

12 (3) A majority of the commission members appointed and serv-
13 ing constitutes a quorum. Final action by the commission shall
14 be only by affirmative vote of a majority of the commission mem-
15 bers appointed and serving. A commission member shall not vote
16 by proxy.

17 (4) The legislature annually shall fix the per diem compen-
18 sation of members of the commission. Expenses of members
19 incurred in the performance of official duties shall be reim-
20 bursed as provided by law for state employees.

21 (5) The department shall furnish administrative services to
22 the commission and shall provide secretarial and other staff nec-
23 essary to allow the proper exercise of the powers and duties of
24 the commission. The department shall provide adequate office
25 space to the commission. The department shall make available the
26 times and places of commission meetings and keep minutes of the
27 meetings and a record of the actions of the commission.

1 (6) The department shall assign professional employees to
2 serve as staff to the commission to assist the commission in the
3 performance of its substantive responsibilities under this act.

4 Sec. 7. (1) A meeting of the commission shall be held pur-
5 suant to the open meetings act, Act No. 267 of the Public Acts of
6 1976, being sections 15.261 to 15.275 of the Michigan Compiled
7 Laws.

8 (2) A writing prepared, owned, used, in the possession of,
9 or retained by the commission or office in the performance of an
10 official function shall be made available to the public pursuant
11 to the freedom of information act, Act No. 442 of the Public Acts
12 of 1976, being sections 15.231 to 15.246 of the Michigan Compiled
13 Laws.

14 Sec. 9. The commission shall do all the following:

15 (a) Stimulate and encourage the study and review of the
16 status of Italian Americans in this state.

17 (b) Develop a unified policy and plan of action to serve the
18 needs of Italian Americans in this state.

19 (c) Advise the governor, the legislature, and the office
20 concerning the coordination and administration of state programs
21 serving Italian Americans.

22 (d) Make recommendations to the governor and legislature
23 regarding changes in state programs, statutes, and policies.

24 (e) Advise the governor and legislature of the nature, mag-
25 nitude, and priorities of the problems of Italian Americans and
26 recent Italian immigrants in this state.

1 (f) Review and approve grants to be made from federal,
2 state, or private funds that are administered by the office.

3 (g) Review and advise the governor and the legislature on
4 the state's policies concerning Italian American affairs.

5 (h) Secure appropriate recognition of Italian American
6 accomplishments and contributions to this state.

7 (i) Review and approve the full written report submitted
8 annually by the office of Italian American affairs as required by
9 section 13.

10 (j) Make recommendations to the governor and legislature
11 regarding methods of overcoming discrimination against Italian
12 Americans in public and private employment and in furthering
13 their civil and political rights.

14 (k) Work to ensure equal access to all levels of education
15 for Italian Americans.

16 (l) Promote methods to ensure equal access to state services
17 for Italian Americans.

18 (m) Promote public awareness of Italian American culture.

19 (n) Cooperate with and coordinate activities with the Indian
20 affairs commission, the commission on Spanish-speaking affairs,
21 the Michigan women's commission, and any other commission that
22 deals with minority or ethnic affairs.

23 (o) Monitor, evaluate, investigate, advocate, and initiate
24 programs for the betterment of Italian Americans in this state.

25 (p) Serve as a clearinghouse for incidents of anti-Italian
26 American harassment in this state.

1 (q) Promote Italian American entrepreneurship.

2 Sec. 11. (1) The office of Italian American affairs is
3 created in the department.

4 (2) The commission shall select the director of the office
5 with the concurrence of the executive director of the department
6 in accordance with state civil service procedures.

7 (3) The department shall furnish administrative services to
8 the office and shall provide secretarial and other staff neces-
9 sary to allow the proper exercise of the powers and duties of the
10 office. The department shall provide adequate office space to
11 the office.

12 (4) The department shall assign professional employees to
13 staff the office who are necessary for the office to perform its
14 substantive responsibilities under this act.

15 Sec. 13. The office shall do all of the following:

16 (a) Provide the commission with information concerning the
17 problems of Italian Americans and implement commission policy.

18 (b) Conduct studies and recommend solutions to the problems
19 of Italian Americans in the areas of education, employment, civil
20 rights, health, housing, senior citizens, mental health, social
21 services, commerce, and other related areas.

22 (c) Recommend to federal, state, and local governmental
23 departments and agencies the creation of services and facilities,
24 as needed.

25 (d) Serve as a clearinghouse for the collection and distri-
26 bution of information on Italian American affairs.

1 (e) Apply for and accept grants and gifts from governmental
2 and private sources.

3 (f) Administer grants programs as authorized by law.

4 (g) Request the services of all state and local governmental
5 departments and agencies to ensure that Italian Americans have
6 access to decision making bodies, the policies of which affect
7 Italian Americans in this state.

8 (h) Cooperate with departments and agencies to aid in effec-
9 tuating the purposes of this act.

10 (i) Review the performance of state departments and agencies
11 regarding the hiring and promotion of Italian Americans by the
12 state departments and agencies and the provision of services to
13 Italian Americans by the state departments and agencies.

14 (j) Review the curriculum programs and policies of elementa-
15 ry, secondary, and postsecondary educational institutions of this
16 state regarding Italian Americans and the admissions programs of
17 postsecondary educational institutions of this state regarding
18 Italian Americans.

19 (k) Submit a full written report of its activities and rec-
20 ommendations each year to the governor, the legislature, and var-
21 ious Italian American communities throughout the state.

22 Sec. 15. Neither section 5(4) nor 11(2) shall be imple-
23 mented unless funds are appropriated to implement those
24 sections.