

CHAPTER 407
FORMERLY
HOUSE BILL NO. 397

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 29 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO THE COMMISSION ON INDIAN HERITAGE AND CULTURE.

WHEREAS, India's rich cultural heritage has provided immeasurable contributions to world civilization including mathematics, specifically trigonometry, algebra, geometry, and calculus; medicine, in the forms of Ayurveda, anesthesia, and surgery; science, specifically physics, astronomy, and chemistry; spiritual traditions, such as Hinduism, yoga, meditation, and religious tolerance; sports and games, such as chess, cards, polo, judo, and karate; Sanskrit, the mother of all European languages; foods of many rich flavors, seasonings, and styles; the arts, such as dance, theatre, painting, music, and cinema; the non-violent teachings of Gandhi; the "Crown of Palaces," the Taj Mahal; and the charity of Mother Theresa, to name a few; and

WHEREAS, Delaware has substantially benefited from the influences and contributions of its citizens, who share an Indian heritage through business, healthcare, education, IT, engineering, and many more; and

WHEREAS, today, the Indian-American community is the fastest-growing and largest Asian-American group in Delaware, with 40% of all Asian-Americans being of Indian descent and a total population of more than 25,000 Indian-Americans; and

WHEREAS, the Indian-American community desires, in a more organized way, to hold health fairs for the community, engage Delaware's children in educational and volunteer events, arrange activities and social happenings for seniors, and continue to educate Delaware's children on various forms of Indian culture; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that programs, workshops, institutes, seminars, and other teacher-training activities for the study of the culture, history, and heritage of Indians and Indian-Americans be conducted at the various high schools and institutions of higher education throughout Delaware; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper to establish a permanent State-level commission to study, design, encourage, and promote Indian-related cultural and educational programs and events in this State.

NOW, THEREFORE:

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

Section 1. Amend Title 29 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and insertions as shown by underline as follows:

Chapter 37. Delaware Commission on Indian Heritage and Culture.

§ 3701. Delaware Commission on Indian Heritage and Culture; creation and purpose.

The Delaware Commission on Indian Heritage and Culture ("Commission") is created to establish, maintain, and develop cultural ties between Indians and Indian-Americans; foster a special interest in the historical and cultural backgrounds of both groups, as well as in the economic, political, social, and artistic life of the countries involved; and help study, establish, or promote programs or events that will provide appropriate awareness of the culture, history, heritage, and language of Indians and Indian-Americans.

§ 3702. Membership; qualifications; terms.

(a) The Commission shall consist of 9 members who are appointed as follows:

(1) Two members, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

(2) Two members, appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

(3) One member, appointed by the Delaware Asian American Business Association.

(4) One member, appointed by the Delaware Association of Physicians of Indian Origin.

(5) One member, appointed by Gujarati Samaj of Delaware.

(6) One member, appointed by the Indo-American Association of Delaware.

(7) One member, appointed by the India U.S. Society of Delaware.

(b) A member of the Commission must be a citizen of the United States descended from Indian ancestry and must hold a professional license in this State, own a business in this State, or reside in this State.

(c) The members of the Commission serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority.

§ 3703. Organization; quorum.

(a) The Commission shall elect a Chair at its first meeting in a calendar year and the Chair shall serve until a replacement is elected. If the Chair becomes vacant, the Commission shall elect a new Chair at its next meeting.

(b) The Chair of the Commission has all of the following duties:

(1) Setting a date, time, and place for the meetings of the Commission.

(2) Supervising the preparation and distribution of meeting notices, agendas, minutes, and other documents prepared by or on behalf of the Commission.

(c) If the Chair becomes vacant, the Secretary of State, or the Secretary's designee, shall fulfill the duties of the Chair contained in subsection (b) of this section until a replacement is elected by the Commission.

(d) A majority of the membership of the Commission constitutes a quorum to conduct official business.

§ 3704. Authority.

The Commission shall fall under the authority of the Secretary of State and shall have such powers, duties, and functions described in § 3701 of this title and such other duties and functions as may be referred to it by the Governor, the Secretary of State, or the General Assembly.

§ 3705. Compensation.

The members of the Commission shall serve without compensation.

Section 2. The Secretary of State, or the Secretary's designee, shall set the date, time, and place for the initial organizational meeting of the Commission.

Approved September 01, 2016