87R5013 MWC-D

By:  King of Parker H.B. No. 3257

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of the Texas Commission on Antisemitism.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1.  Subtitle D, Title 4, Government Code, is amended by adding Chapter 448 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 448. TEXAS COMMISSION ON ANTISEMITISM

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

Sec. 448.001.  DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1)  "Antisemitism" means a certain perception of Jews that may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. The term includes rhetorical and physical acts of antisemitism directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals or their property or toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

(2)  "Commission" means the Texas Commission on Antisemitism.

Sec. 448.002.  SUNSET PROVISION. The Texas Commission on Antisemitism is subject to Chapter 325 (Texas Sunset Act). Unless continued in existence as provided by that chapter, the commission is abolished and this chapter expires September 1, 2033.

Sec. 448.003.  ADMINISTRATIVE ATTACHMENT. The commission is administratively attached to the Texas Historical Commission.

SUBCHAPTER B. TEXAS COMMISSION ON ANTISEMITISM

Sec. 448.051.  COMPOSITION OF COMMISSION. (a) The governor shall appoint nine members to the commission.

(b)  A member of the commission must be a resident of this state.

(c)  The commission must include members who have demonstrated a significant interest in and are knowledgeable about issues in the Jewish community and antisemitism.

Sec. 448.052.  TERMS. (a) Commission members serve staggered six-year terms with the terms of three members expiring February 1 of each odd-numbered year.

(b)  A commission member is eligible for reappointment to another term or part of a term.

(c)  A commission member may not serve more than two consecutive terms. For purposes of this subsection, a member is considered to have served a term only if the member served two or more years of the member's term.

Sec. 448.053.  PRESIDING OFFICER. The governor shall designate a member of the commission as presiding officer of the commission to serve in that capacity at the pleasure of the governor.

Sec. 448.054.  COMPENSATION; EXPENSES. A member of the commission is not entitled to compensation but is entitled to reimbursement for the travel expenses incurred by the member while transacting commission business, as provided by the General Appropriations Act.

Sec. 448.055.  MEETINGS; QUORUM; PUBLIC ACCESS. (a) The commission shall meet at least quarterly at the times and places in this state the commission designates.

(b)  Five voting members of the commission constitute a quorum for transacting commission business.

(c)  The commission shall develop and implement policies that provide the public with a reasonable opportunity to appear before the commission and speak on any issue under the jurisdiction of the commission.

Sec. 448.056.  COORDINATOR; STAFF. (a) The Texas Historical Commission shall provide one part-time employee to serve as the coordinator for the commission to transact commission business.

(b)  The Texas Historical Commission may provide staff and may support functions and activities of the commission from money available to the Texas Historical Commission that may be used for this purpose. The legislature may also specifically appropriate money to the Texas Historical Commission to provide staff and to otherwise support functions and activities of the commission.

SUBCHAPTER C. DUTIES AND FUNDING

Sec. 448.101.  ADVISORY STATUS OF COMMISSION. (a) In implementing its powers and duties under this chapter, the commission functions only in an advisory capacity. Membership on the commission does not constitute a public office.

(b)  Chapter 2110 does not apply to the commission.

Sec. 448.102.  DUTIES OF COMMISSION. (a) The commission shall:

(1)  conduct a study on antisemitism in this state and submit a report on the results of the study to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and each member of the legislature not later than November 1 of each even-numbered year;

(2)  provide advice and assistance to public and private primary and secondary schools and institutions of higher education in this state regarding methods of combating antisemitism;

(3)  meet with appropriate representatives of public and private organizations, including service organizations, to provide information on and to assist in planning, coordinating, or modifying antisemitism awareness programs; and

(4)  solicit volunteers to participate in commemorative events designed to enhance public awareness of the fight against antisemitism.

(b)  The commission shall adopt rules as necessary for its own procedures.

Sec. 448.103.  FUNDING; AFFILIATED NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION. (a) The commission may accept gifts, grants, and donations from a public or private source for the commission to use in performing the commission's duties under this chapter.

(b)  The commission may participate in the establishment and operation of an affiliated nonprofit organization whose purpose is to raise funds for or provide services or other benefits to the commission.

SECTION 2.  As soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, the governor shall appoint members to the Texas Commission on Antisemitism as provided by Chapter 448, Government Code, as added by this Act. To implement the staggering of terms of members of the commission provided by Section 448.052, Government Code, as added by this Act, in making the first appointments to the commission, the governor shall provide for three of the members to serve terms expiring February 1, 2023, three of the members to serve terms expiring February 1, 2025, and three of the members to serve terms expiring February 1, 2027. Subsequent appointments shall be for six-year terms, as provided by Section 448.052, Government Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 3.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.