

**REPORT OF THE BOARD OF STATE
COMMISSIONERS FOR THE GENERAL
SUPERVISION OF CHARITABLE, PENAL,
PAUPER, AND REFORMATORY
INSTITUTIONS, PP. 1-122**

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STATE OF MICHIGAN.

AN ACT

To Provide for the Appointment of a Board of Commissioners for the General Supervision of Penal, Pauper, and Reformatory Institutions, and Defining their Powers and Duties.

SECTION 1. *The People of the State of Michigan enact, That within fifteen days after the passage of this act, with the advice and consent of the Senate, the Governor shall appoint three suitable persons, residents of the State, to be called and known as "The Board of State Commissioners, for the general supervision of Charitable, Penal, Pauper, and Reformatory Institutions," who shall hold their office respectively for the period of two, four, and six years, as indicated by the Governor in making the appointments; and all appointments thereafter made, except to fill vacancies, shall be for the period of six years. Any vacancy occurring in said board, by reason of removal, resignation, or otherwise, shall be filled by the Governor, the appointment in any case thus made to be subject to ratification or rejection by the Senate at the first regular session following such appointment. The Governor may remove any member of said board for misfeasance or malfeasance in office.*

SEC. 2. Before entering upon the discharge of their duties,

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each of the said Commissioners shall take and subscribe before the Secretary of State, who shall file the same in his office, the constitutional oath of office. The said Commissioners shall have power to appoint a secretary, not of their number, whose duties they may prescribe and whose salary they may establish and determine.

SEC. 3. The said Commissioners, by one of their number, or by their secretary, shall, at least once in each year, visit and examine into the *condition* of each and every of the city and county poor-houses, county jails, or other places for the detention of criminals or witnesses; and the said board, or a majority thereof, with their secretary, shall, at least once in each year, visit and examine the Reform School, State Prison, Detroit House of Correction, and State and county asylums for the insane, and the deaf, dumb, and blind, and for the purpose of ascertaining the *actual condition* of the institutions by them or by either of them visited, the *method of instruction, government, or management therein pursued*, the official conduct of the superintendents or other officers and employes in charge thereof, or connected therewith, the condition of the buildings, grounds, or other property thereunto belonging, and the facts as to all other matters in any manner pertaining to the usefulness and proper management of the institutions, poor-houses, and jails above named. They, or either of them, and their secretary, shall have free access thereto at any and all times, and shall have authority to administer oaths and examine any person or persons in any way connected with or having knowledge of the condition, management, and discipline of such institutions, jails, or poor-houses, as to any matters or inquiries not contrary to the purposes or provisions of this act.

SEC. 4. The said Commissioners shall receive no compensation for their time or services, except as hereinafter particularly provided; but the actual expenses of each of them, while engaged in the performance of their duties under this act, and

any actual outlay for stationery, office rent, or any necessary aid or assistance required in examinations or investigations, on being fully stated in account and verified by the affidavit of the Commissioner or Commissioners making the charge, and approved by the Governor, shall be paid quarterly by the State Treasurer on the warrant of the Auditor General, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated; and the secretary of said board shall be paid in like manner: *Provided*, That the entire expense of said board or commission, including their compensation for services, as required by the seventh section of this act, and the salary and traveling expenses of their secretary, shall not exceed the sum of three thousand dollars per annum.

SEC. 5. No member of said board, or their secretary, shall be either directly or indirectly interested in any contract for building, repairing, or furnishing any institution, poor-house, or jail which by this act they are authorized to visit and inspect; nor shall any officer of such institution, jail, or poor-house be eligible to the office of Commissioner hereby created, nor shall any two members of said board be residents of the same county.

SEC. 6. On or before the first day of October, in the year eighteen hundred and seventy-two, and in each second year thereafter, the said board shall report in writing to the Governor, fully, the result of their investigations, together with such other information and recommendations as they may deem proper, including their opinions and conclusions as to the necessity of further legislation to improve the condition and extend the usefulness of the various State, county, and other institutions by them visited; and the said Commissioners, or either of them, shall make any special investigation into alleged abuse in any of the institutions which by this act they are authorized to visit, whenever the Governor shall so direct, and report the result thereof to him at such reasonable time as he shall prescribe. And whenever any abusive treatment

of those confined in any of said institutions shall come to the knowledge of said commissioners, which, in their opinion, requires immediate attention and redress, they shall forthwith report the facts of such abusive treatment to the Governor, with such recommendations for the correction of the same as they shall deem proper.

SEC. 7. And the said board, in addition to the duties above prescribed, shall make a thorough examination of all the penal, criminal, or other laws of the State relating to the penal or reformatory institutions by them to be visited, or in any wise relating to the custody and punishment of criminals, and the care and confinement of the county poor and pauper insane, for the purpose of a revision of such laws by the Legislature at the first regular session following the passage of this act; and to accomplish this end, said board shall collect together all acts and parts of acts in any manner pertaining to the control, punishment, and reformation of criminals, and to the care and custody of the county poor and pauper insane, and shall report the same fully to the Governor, on or before November first, eighteen hundred and seventy-two, together with such revision, amendments, and suggestions for the improvement thereof as to such board shall be deemed necessary and expedient; the report thus made to be submitted to the Legislature by the Governor. And each of said board, for the time actually required and expended in the discharge of his duties under this section, shall be entitled to demand and receive such reasonable compensation as shall be approved by the Governor, and which shall be paid in the manner heretofore provided for the payment of their actual traveling and other necessary expenses: *Provided*, That said board shall not perform the duties provided in this section if any law shall be enacted at this session of the Legislature authorizing the same work by any other board or commission.

SEC. 8. Nothing in this act shall be construed as impairing the authority or interfering with the duties of the Board of