

# THE NEW JERSEY ASCENT & RENAISSANCE ACT NJ ARA

## A Statutory Interface for the Garden State

### THE CRISIS:

- **Red Tape:** Critical infrastructure projects are stalled by permitting delays.
- **Housing Instability:** Courts are clogged with eviction filings, tenants sign leases they may not understand.
- **Civic Deserts:** Ensure resources and services are available throughout the State.

THE SOLUTION: A revenue positive Service & Education mandate that mobilizes New Jersey youth to secure the economic defense of the State.

## I. THE SERVICE COMMISSION

### THE GOVERNOR'S GUARD - Statutory Navigators

- **Mission:** Deployed to Housing and Civil Courts.
- **Impact:** Reduces the eviction backlog and ensures compliance with the Anti-Eviction Act.

### THE CIVIC CORPS - Resilience Teams

- **Mission:** Deployed to Civic Deserts.
- **Impact:**
  - **Food Security:** Builds the Strategic Biotic Reserve and Agrarian Defense Hubs.
  - **Digital Hardening:** Helping citizens secure their digital identities against AI fraud.

### THE INDUSTRIAL GUARD - Grid Hardening

- **Mission:** Vocational apprentices dedicated to physical infrastructure.
- **Impact:** Enforces the Green Tape Protocol, a 45 Day Permitting Period that overrides local zoning for projects using 100 Year Durability Materials.

## II. THE EDUCATION MANDATE

### Statutory Fluency for Every Graduate.

- Amends P.L.2018, c.167 to mandate instruction in **Contractual Defense, AI Literacy, and Labor Sovereignty**.
- **The Goal:** Prevention. Teaching students how to read a lease and contracts.

## THE SUSTAINABILITY MODEL

### SELF-FUNDING ARCHITECTURE. REVENUE POSITIVE.

- **Sustainability:** Funded entirely by a \$15 Statutory Oversight Surcharge (SOS) on landlord tenant filings.
- **The Lockbox:** Revenue is deposited into the Governor's Guard Trust Fund.
- **The Guarantee:** Includes the Referendum clause to place a Constitutional Amendment on the ballot, permanently dedicating these funds to the Corps.

REQUEST: Sponsorship of S.\_\_\_\_\_ A.\_\_\_\_\_

# NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE

## STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATION

SENATE, No. \_\_\_ ASSEMBLY, No. \_\_\_

**SPONSOR:** Senator \_\_\_\_\_ Assembly Member \_\_\_\_\_

**SYNOPSIS:** Establishes the **New Jersey Ascent & Renaissance Act**, creating the Governor's Guard and Civic Corps, mandates Statutory Fluency education, dedicates funding for the economic defense of the State.

**PURPOSE:** To operationalize the Garden State identity by mobilizing the surplus talent of New Jersey's youth to solve our three most persistent structural deficits: administrative friction, food insecurity in Civic Deserts, and the decay of critical infrastructure.

### SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS:

#### **Title II: The Education Mandate - Statutory Fluency**

- **The Curriculum:** Amends P.L.2018, c.167 to mandate instruction in Contractual Defense, AI Literacy, and Labor Sovereignty (the ABC Test for independent contractors).
- **The Credential:** Establishes the **Liberty Seal of Statutory Fluency** for graduates who pass a Department approved Warrant of Navigation exam.

#### **Title IV: Service Divisions** - Establishes the New Jersey Service Commission to oversee:

1. **Governor's Guard:** Statutory Navigators deployed to Civil and Housing Courts to expedite filings and reduce the eviction backlog.
2. **Civic Corps:** Deployed to establish the Strategic Biotic Reserve, Agrarian Defense Hubs, and provide Digital Hardening, AI defense/Cybersecurity for seniors and all vulnerable populations.
3. **Industrial Guard:** Vocational apprentices deployed to harden the grid. Grants the Commission Green Tape Authority (Section 403), mandating a 45 day approval deadline for critical projects, overriding local zoning obstruction.

#### **Title VII: Sustainability**

- **The Surcharge:** Establishes a \$15 Statutory Oversight Surcharge (SOS) on Landlord Tenant filings.
- **The Lockbox:** Creates the Governor's Guard Trust Fund and directs the Secretary of State to place a Referendum on the ballot to constitutionally dedicate these revenues.

## **JUSTIFICATION:**

1. Cutting the Green Tape - Infrastructure Velocity - This bill creates a 45 Day Permitting Period for Industrial Guard projects. If the State is paying for 100 year durability, the State has the right to build it without delay. This is a massive deregulation for critical resilience work.
2. The Garden State Imperative - Food Sovereignty - The Civic Corps directly addresses food deserts by building the Strategic Biotic Reserve and Agrarian Defense Hubs, turning the state's agricultural heritage into modern food security defense.
3. Ending the Eviction Mill - Administrative Defense - By deploying Statutory Navigators to review filings before they reach the judge, we reduce administrative friction, saving time for landlords and preventing wrongful evictions for tenants.

**FISCAL IMPACT: REVENUE POSITIVE.** Self funded via the SOS (\$15 surcharge). Zero impact on the General Fund.

**CONSTITUTIONAL LOCKBOX:** While this legislation statutorily dedicates revenue to the Trust Fund, the Sponsor intends to introduce a companion Assembly Concurrent Resolution (ACR). This Resolution will propose a Constitutional Amendment to voters, permanently protecting these funds from executive diversion, ensuring solvency in perpetuity.

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

222nd LEGISLATURE

SENATE, No. \_\_\_\_

NJ ARA 2026

## THE NEW JERSEY ASCENT & RENAISSANCE ACT (NJ ARA)

Sponsored by: Senator \_\_\_\_\_, District \_\_\_\_ & Member of Assembly \_\_\_\_\_, District \_\_\_\_

**SYNOPSIS: Establishes the New Jersey Ascent & Renaissance, creates the Governor's Guard and Civic Corps, mandates Statutory Fluency education, and dedicates funding for the economic defense of the State.**

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT As Introduced.**

### EXECUTIVE ABSTRACT

I. THE EDUCATION MANDATE - TITLE II Amends P.L.2018, c.167 to mandate Statutory Fluency, instruction in Contractual Defense, AI Literacy, and Labor Sovereignty, and establishes the Liberty Seal of Statutory Fluency for high school graduates.

II. SERVICE - TITLE IV Establishes the New Jersey Service Commission to oversee the three service divisions:

- **Governor's Guard:** Statutory Navigators in courts and agencies.
- **Civic Corps:** Food security through the Strategic Biotic Reserve and Agrarian Defense Hubs, and Digital Hardening for vulnerable populations.
- **Industrial Guard:** Grid hardening using the 100 year material durability and the Green Tape Protocol, 45 day permitting period.

III. FUNDING & PERMANENCE - TITLE VII Creates the Governor's Guard Trust Fund, supported by a \$15 Statutory Oversight Surcharge (SOS) on landlord tenant filings, inflation adjusted every three years. Includes the Referendum clause to constitutionally dedicate these funds.

### COMPLIANCE STATUS

- **CIVIL SERVICE: PREFERENCE GRANTED**, Three (3) Points, Subordinated to Veterans.
- **PERMITTING: FINITE PERIOD**, Overrides Local Zoning for Critical Infrastructure.
- **FISCAL: REVENUE POSITIVE**, Self funded through SOS.
- **CONTINUITY: ANALOG BACK-UP**, Physical Gold Copy Ledger.

A Statutory Interface for the vigor of our youth and the resilience of the **Garden State**.

TRENTON, NEW JERSEY

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
SENATE AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
BILL: NJ ARA 2026**

**AN ACT establishing the New Jersey Ascent & Renaissance, creating the Governor's Guard and Civic Corps, mandating Statutory Fluency education, and dedicating funds for the economic defense of the State.**

**BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:**

**TITLE I: PREAMBLE & INTENT**

**SECTION 101. TITLE.** This Act shall be known and may be cited as the **New Jersey Ascent & Renaissance Act (NJ ARA)**.

**SECTION 102. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.**

- (a) Civilian Defense. The Legislature finds that administrative delay and infrastructure decay constitute threats to the general welfare.
- (b) The Meritocratic Reserve. The youth of New Jersey represent a strategic reserve of talent.
- (c) Statutory Interface. This Act establishes a Statutory Interface between the Citizen and the State, harmonizing with the federal American Economic Defense Act.

**TITLE II: THE EDUCATION MANDATE - STATUTORY FLUENCY**

**SECTION 201. AMENDMENT TO P.L.2018, c.167.**

Section 1 of P.L.2018, c.167 (C.18A:35-4.34) is amended to read as follows:

c. The State board shall require that the financial literacy instruction include Statutory Fluency, Contractual Defense, and Artificial Intelligence Literacy.

(1) Alignment & Reciprocity. The curriculum adopted under this section shall align with the Model Statutory Fluency Standard established by the federal National Center for Statutory Fluency. Proficiency in this curriculum shall constitute the Baseline Merit Standard required for a student's eligibility for the Federal Reciprocal Service Gateway under Section 202(g) of the American Economic Defense Act.

(2) Housing Stability. A comparative analysis of the Standard NJ Residential Lease, the Truth-in-Renting Act (N.J.S.A. 46:8-43), and the identification of illegal lease and contract clauses.

(3) Labor Sovereignty. The legal distinction between Employee (W-2) and Independent Contractor (1099), (The ABC Test), including the review of non-compete and service agreements. Special emphasis shall be placed on the identification of Unconscionable Clauses as defined by the New Jersey Supreme Court, ensuring students can identify unenforceable Surrender of Rights in standard contracts.

(4) Debt Instruments. The structure of promissory notes, personal guarantees, and the legal consequences of default. Instruction shall include the Statutory Asset Defense strategies: understanding the New Jersey Homestead Exemption and the protection of essential industrial

tools from seizure under N.J.S.A. 2A:17-19. Instruction shall include the detection of Predatory Arbitration Clauses and the mathematical analysis of Deferred Interest in retail credit instruments.

(5) Artificial Intelligence Literacy. Instruction on the identification of algorithmic bias, the detection of deepfakes and digital fraud, and the ethical use of automated systems in economic life.

## **SECTION 202. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & FUNDING.**

(a) Federal Alignment. Funds received by the State pursuant to the Bonus Allocation under Section 104(b) of the federal American Economic Defense Act shall be strictly appropriated for the professional development of social studies and financial literacy teachers, specifically regarding:

(1) AI Literacy: Training on digital verification and algorithmic logic.

(2) Contractual Defense: Training on the legal analysis of leases, employment, and all contracts.

(b) In the event federal funds are unavailable, the Commissioner is authorized to utilize a portion of the Governor's Guard Trust Fund to maintain the currency of the curriculum.

## **SECTION 203. SAFE HARBOR & IMMUNITY.**

No cause of action shall arise against a school district, board of education, or employee thereof for any loss or damage caused by an act or omission resulting from the implementation of the Statutory Fluency curriculum. The instruction provided under this act shall be deemed educational information and shall not constitute the practice of law or legal advice.

## **SECTION 204. THE LIVING CURRICULUM PROTOCOL.**

The Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the Attorney General and the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development, shall annually review and update the Statutory Fluency curriculum to reflect significant changes in New Jersey case law, tenant protections, and labor regulations. These updates shall be distributed to all school districts no later than August 1st of each year.

## **SECTION 205. THE LIBERTY SEAL OF STATUTORY FLUENCY.**

(a) There is established the Liberty Seal of Statutory Fluency to recognize high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in economic and legal self defense.

(b) The Seal shall be affixed to the high school transcript and diploma of any student who attains a digitally verifiable credential compatible with the federal Crest Registry, and who:

(1) Completes the full course of study described in Section 201, and

(2) Achieves a passing score on a Department approved assessment of contractual competence.

This assessment shall be modeled on the Warrant of Navigation Entrance Exam, certifying the student as a Civic Conductor capable of navigating the primary administrative portals of the State and Federal government.

(c) Results of the assessment described in subsection (b) shall be considered student records and shall be exempt from public access pursuant to P.L.1963, c.73 (C.47:1A-1 et seq.). Such data shall not be shared with private financial or lending institutions.

## **SECTION 206. SERVICE CORPS PIPELINE.**

Any student who earns the Liberty Seal of Statutory Fluency shall be granted Priority Status for admission into the Governor's Guard or the Industrial Guard and shall receive one (1) year of Service Credit toward the forty (40) year Service to Equity requirement. This Seal shall be recognized as the equivalent of a Federal Merit Credential for the purposes of National Constitution Corps recruitment.

## **TITLE III: ESTABLISHMENT & GOVERNANCE**

### **SECTION 301. THE NEW JERSEY SERVICE COMMISSION.**

There is established in, but not of, the Department of State, the New Jersey Service Commission.

### **SECTION 302. INDEPENDENCE & COMPOSITION.**

(a) The Commission shall consist of (5) five members: three (3) appointed by the Governor (no more than two (2) of the same party) and two (2) by the Legislature.

(b) Staggered Terms. Commissioners shall serve staggered five (5) year terms to ensure operational continuity across administrations.

### **SECTION 303. RED TEAM AUDIT.**

Every four (4) years, an independent Red Team shall stress test the Corps' financial, structural, and operational systems to prevent inefficiencies and ensure the integrity of the Trust Fund.

## **TITLE IV: SERVICE DIVISIONS**

### **SECTION 401. THE GOVERNOR'S GUARD.**

(a) Mission. A selective, uniformed division serving as Statutory Navigators in Courts and Agencies.

(b) Intake Command. Navigators shall perform intake duties to ensure filings comply with the Anti-Eviction Act (N.J.S.A. 2A:18-61.1) and identify Unconscionable Clauses.

(c) UPL Exemption. Notwithstanding N.J.S.A. 2C:21-22, administrative assistance provided by commissioned Fellows shall not constitute the unauthorized practice of law.

### **SECTION 402. THE CIVIC CORPS.**

(a) Mission. A general service division for college aged students or older serving in Civic Deserts and Digital Hardening Zones.

- (b) Agrarian Defense Hubs. The Corps shall establish Victory Garden hubs in designated deserts to ensure food security.
- (c) Digital Hardening. The Corps shall deploy teams to harden community resilience, including assisting vulnerable populations in securing their digital identity and defending against algorithmic fraud.
- (d) Municipal Priority. Partner municipalities receive priority for State Discretionary Aid.

#### **SECTION 403. THE INDUSTRIAL GUARD.**

- (a) Mission. A vocational division dedicated to physical infrastructure and grid hardening.
- (b) Long Term Material Standard. Any project executed by the Guard must utilize advanced, self healing, or high durability materials certified for a 100 year operational life.
- (c) The Green Tape Protocol.
  - (1) Priority Review. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, ordinance, or regulation to the contrary, all permitting applications filed by the Industrial Guard or for projects utilizing 100 year materials shall be rendered a final decision by the relevant municipal or state agency within forty-five (45) days.
  - (2) Deemed Approved. Failure to render a decision within such period shall result in the application being "Deemed Approved," contingent upon a final safety review by the Commission.
- (d) Apprenticeship. Service counts toward Registered Apprenticeship requirements.
- (e) The Digital Twin Protocol. Every infrastructure project commissioned under the Long Term Material Standard shall be paired with a "Digital Twin," a dynamic, 3D structural ledger maintained by the Commission. This ledger shall record the material provenance, stress tests, and maintenance history of the asset for its entire 100 year lifecycle.

#### **TITLE V: BENEFITS & OPERATIONS.**

##### **SECTION 501. SERVICE.**

- (a) Base Liability. The standard term of service is 1,700 hours.

##### **SECTION 502. HEALTH COVERAGE.**

- (a) Statutory Volunteer Status. Fellows shall be classified as Statutory Volunteers and not employees for purposes of the New Jersey Wage and Hour Law.
- (b) Workers' Compensation. Notwithstanding subsection (a), Fellows shall be deemed employees for the sole purpose of coverage under the Workers' Compensation Act (N.J.S.A. 34:15-1 et seq.).
- (c) Health Coverage. All Fellows serving more than 20 hours per week shall receive health coverage that includes comprehensive mental health counseling.

## **TITLE VI: STANDARDS & RIGHTS**

### **SECTION 601. DATA.**

- (a) Data. Biometric and behavioral data generated by Fellows is a Sovereign Asset of the State and shall not be sold to third party brokers.
- (b) Algorithmic Due Process. No Fellow shall be disciplined or discharged based solely on the output of an AI system. All adverse actions require human Command review.

### **SECTION 602. BIOTIC SECURITY - THE HEIRLOOM RESERVE.**

The Commission shall maintain a State Heirloom Seed Bank.

## **TITLE VII: FUNDING & PERMANENCE**

### **SECTION 701. THE STATUTORY OVERSIGHT SURCHARGE (SOS).**

- (a) There is established a \$15.00 surcharge on every Landlord Tenant complaint filing.
- (b) Inflation Adjustment. The Treasurer shall adjust this fee every three (3) years based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to ensure the fiscal sustainability of the Corps.

### **SECTION 702. THE GOVERNOR'S GUARD TRUST FUND.**

Revenue from the SOS shall be deposited into a dedicated, non-lapsing Trust Fund established in the Department of the Treasury. Monies deposited in the Trust Fund shall be held in a separate account and shall not be transferred or used for any purpose other than those explicitly authorized by this Act.

## **TITLE VIII: BENEFITS, EQUITY & FEDERAL TIES**

### **SECTION 801. CIVIL SERVICE PREFERENCE.**

- (a) Examination Credit. Graduates of the Governor's Guard receive three (3) additional points on any open competitive Civil Service exam.
- (b) Veterans Subordination. This credit shall be added to the final score after the application of any Absolute Veterans Preference established by N.J.S.A. 11A:5-1, ensuring constitutional compliance.

### **SECTION 802. THE SERVICE TO EQUITY BRIDGE.**

- (a) Ascent Credits. Fellows earn Ascent Credits for every year of service.
- (b) The 40 Year Goal. A career spanning forty (40) years of cumulative service (Guard plus Civil Service) shall entitle the Fellow to 80% Home Equity in a state certified Ascent Suite.

### **SECTION 803. FEDERAL INTEROPERABILITY.**

- (a) Affiliate Status. The Commission is directed to petition for Affiliate Unit status under the federal American Economic Defense Act.
- (b) Reciprocity. The Commission shall recognize Service Passports from other states adhering to the National Standard.
- (c) Service Passport. All credentials shall be issued via the Crest Registry for instant federal verification.

### **SECTION 804. CONDUCT.**

The benefits, credits, and preferences established in this Title are contingent upon Honorable Service. The Commission reserves the right to revoke the Liberty Seal of Statutory Fluency and clawback unredeemed Ascent Credits from any Fellow convicted of a felony involving public corruption or a breach of the Oath of Service.

## **TITLE IX: PROVISIONS**

### **SECTION 901. SEVERABILITY.**

If any clause is held invalid, the remainder remains in full force. This Act shall function as a Sovereign Interface, conflicts with administrative regulations shall be resolved in favor of the Corps.

### **SECTION 902. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

This Act shall take effect immediately, with the Surcharge established in Section 701 commencing on the first day of the next fiscal quarter.

### **SECTION 903. THE ANALOG RECORD - CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS.**

- (a) The Physical Ledger. The Commission shall maintain a physical, archival grade hard copy ledger of all Service Credits, Ascent Credits, and State Seal of Statutory Fluency, to be updated quarterly and stored in a secure, non-digital vault within the New Jersey State Archives.
- (b) The Gold Copy Standard. In the event of a catastrophic digital failure, cyber attack, or data corruption event, the Physical Ledger shall serve as the Gold Copy of record, superseding any conflicting digital data until system integrity is restored.