

As Reported by the Senate Rules Committee

130th General Assembly

Regular Session

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H. C. R. No. 34

Representative Huffman

Cosponsors: Representatives Adams, R., Amstutz, Anielski, Ashford, Baker, Beck, Blair, Blessing, Buchy, Burkley, Butler, Damschroder, Derickson, Grossman, Hackett, Hall, Hill, Lynch, McClain, McGregor, Phillips, Roegner, Ruhl, Sears, Smith, Stebelton, Strahorn, Speaker Batchelder

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To adopt the Legislative Code of Ethics for the members and employees of both chambers of the 130th General Assembly, employees of any legislative agency, and candidates for the 131st General Assembly.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF OHIO (THE SENATE CONCURRING):

WHEREAS, The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate pursuant to section 101.34 of the Revised Code, is required to recommend a Code of Ethics that is consistent with the law to govern all members and employees of each chamber of the General Assembly and all candidates for the office of member of each chamber; and

WHEREAS, The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee is the appropriate ethics committee for matters relating to members and employees of the General Assembly, employees of any legislative agency, including the Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board, Correctional Institution Inspection Committee, Joint Committee on

Agency Rule Review, Legislative Information Systems, Legislative 18
Inspector General, Legislative Service Commission, and Ohio 19
Constitutional Modernization Commission, and candidates for the 20
office of member of the General Assembly; now therefore be it 21

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives and the Senate of 22
the 130th General Assembly adopt the following Legislative Code of 23
Ethics: 24

LEGISLATIVE CODE OF ETHICS 25
FOR MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE 26
130th OHIO GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 27
EMPLOYEES OF ANY LEGISLATIVE AGENCY, 28
AND CANDIDATES FOR THE 131st GENERAL ASSEMBLY 29

SECTION 1. CONDUCT 30

All members of the Senate or the House of Representatives 31
shall conduct themselves at all times so as to reflect credit upon 32
the member's respective chamber of the General Assembly, shall 33
obey all rules of the member's respective chamber of the General 34
Assembly, and shall conform the member's conduct to this Code of 35
Ethics. All employees of the Senate or House of Representatives 36
and all employees of any legislative agency shall conduct 37
themselves at all times so as to reflect credit upon the 38
employee's respective chamber of the General Assembly or 39
institution of employment, shall obey all rules of the employee's 40
respective chamber of the General Assembly or institution of 41
employment, and shall conform the employee's conduct to this Code 42
of Ethics. 43

SECTION 2. DISCLOSURE STATEMENT 44

(A) The Office of the Legislative Inspector General shall 45
accept disclosure statements filed by members and employees of the 46
General Assembly and employees of any legislative agency pursuant 47
to section 102.02 of the Revised Code and shall maintain a file of 48

all disclosure statements that are filed pursuant to that section. 49
Every member of the General Assembly and every employee of the 50
General Assembly and any legislative agency who is required to 51
file a financial disclosure statement, within the period 52
prescribed by law, shall file with the Office of the Legislative 53
Inspector General, a disclosure statement as provided for by 54
section 102.02 of the Revised Code. Each member and each employee 55
of the General Assembly and employee of any legislative agency 56
required to file a financial disclosure statement, within the 57
period and in the manner prescribed by section 102.02 of the 58
Revised Code, shall receive from the Office of the Legislative 59
Inspector General the form on which the statement shall be 60
prepared. 61

(B) Division (A)(2)(c) of section 102.02 of the Revised Code 62
applies to members of the General Assembly who are attorneys or 63
physicians or who otherwise engage in the practice of a profession 64
and to the clients, patients, and other recipients of professional 65
services of members of the General Assembly who are attorneys or 66
physicians or who otherwise engage in the practice of a 67
profession, even if those clients, patients, and other recipients 68
of professional services are legislative agents. 69

(C) Division (A)(8) of section 102.02 of the Revised Code 70
requires a member of the General Assembly and an employee of the 71
General Assembly or any legislative agency required to file a 72
disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code to 73
identify on a disclosure statement the source and amount of any 74
payment of expenses incurred for travel to destinations inside or 75
outside this state that the member or employee receives in the 76
member's or employee's own name or that another person receives 77
for the member's or employee's use or benefit in connection with 78
the member's or employee's official duties, except for expenses 79
for travel to meetings or conventions of a national or state 80

organization to which any state agency, including, but not limited 81
to, any legislative agency or state institution of higher 82
education as defined in section 3345.011 of the Revised Code, pays 83
membership dues, or any political subdivision or any office or 84
agency of a political subdivision pays membership dues. 85

(D) Division (A)(9) of section 102.02 of the Revised Code 86
requires a member of the General Assembly and an employee of the 87
General Assembly or any legislative agency required to file a 88
disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code to 89
identify on a disclosure statement the source of payment of 90
expenses for meals and other food and beverages that are incurred 91
in connection with the person's official duties and that exceed 92
one hundred dollars aggregated per calendar year, except for 93
expenses for meals and other food and beverages provided at a 94
meeting at which the member or employee participated in a panel, 95
seminar, or speaking engagement or at a meeting or convention of a 96
national or state organization to which a state agency, including, 97
but not limited to, any legislative agency or state institution of 98
higher education as defined in section 3345.011 of the Revised 99
Code, pays membership dues, or any political subdivision or any 100
office or agency of a political subdivision pays membership dues. 101

(E)(1) Except as otherwise provided in division (E)(2) of 102
this section, in accordance with section 102.02 of the Revised 103
Code, every member of the General Assembly and every employee of 104
the General Assembly or any legislative agency required to file an 105
annual statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code shall 106
disclose the source of a gift or gifts, where the value of the 107
gift or gifts aggregated per calendar year exceeds seventy-five 108
dollars, except gifts received by will or by virtue of section 109
2105.06 of the Revised Code, or received from spouses, parents, 110
grandparents, children, grandchildren, siblings, nephews, nieces, 111
uncles, aunts, cousins, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, 112

sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, fathers-in-law, mothers-in-law, 113
step-relations, or any person to whom the member or employee of 114
the General Assembly or employee of any legislative agency stands 115
in loco parentis, or received by way of distribution from any 116
inter vivos or testamentary trust established by a spouse or by an 117
ancestor. 118

(2) In accordance with section 102.02 of the Revised Code, 119
every member of the General Assembly and every employee of the 120
General Assembly or any legislative agency required to file an 121
annual statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code shall 122
disclose the source of a gift or gifts from a legislative agent, 123
where the value of the gift or gifts aggregated per calendar year 124
exceeds twenty-five dollars. 125

SECTION 3. LICENSE DISCLOSURE 126

Any member of the General Assembly who engages in the conduct 127
or practice of a particular business, profession, trade, or 128
occupation that is subject to licensing or regulation by any 129
branch, department, division, institution, instrumentality, board, 130
commission, or bureau of the state shall file a notice that the 131
member is the holder of a particular license, or is engaged in 132
such activity, as part of the financial disclosure statement 133
required by section 102.02 of the Revised Code. 134

SECTION 4. VOTING ABSTENTION 135

(A) A member who has reason to believe that the member has a 136
substantial personal interest in legislation may request 137
permission of the chair to abstain from voting on the legislation 138
and may state the member's reason for the request. The request 139
shall be granted by the chair or the member's respective chamber 140
of the General Assembly pursuant to the rules of that chamber. The 141
request and permission to abstain shall be entered in the House or 142
Senate Journal, as is appropriate. 143

(B) No member of the General Assembly shall vote on any 144
legislation that the member knows is then being actively advocated 145
if the member is one of the following with respect to a 146
legislative agent or employer that is then actively advocating on 147
that legislation: 148

(1) An employee, as defined in section 102.031 of the Revised 149
Code; 150

(2) A business associate, as defined in section 102.031 of 151
the Revised Code; 152

(3) A person, other than an employee, who is hired under 153
contract to perform certain services, and such position involves a 154
substantial and material exercise of administrative discretion in 155
the formulation of public policy. 156

(C) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may impose a fine 157
of not more than one thousand dollars upon a member of the General 158
Assembly who violates division (B) of this section. 159

SECTION 5. COMPENSATION 160

(A) Except as provided in division (D) of section 102.04 of 161
the Revised Code, no person elected to or employed by the General 162
Assembly or employed by any legislative agency shall receive or 163
agree to receive, directly or indirectly, compensation other than 164
from the house with which the person serves or from any 165
legislative agency, if the person is a legislative agency 166
employee, for any service rendered or to be rendered by the person 167
personally in any case, proceeding, application, or other matter 168
that is before the General Assembly or any department, division, 169
institution, instrumentality, board, commission, or bureau of the 170
state, excluding the courts. 171

Division (A) of this section shall not be construed to 172
prohibit the performance of ministerial functions, including, but 173
not limited to, the filing or amendment of tax returns, 174

applications for permits and licenses, incorporation papers, 175
security registrations, and other documents. 176

Except as provided in division (D) of section 102.04 of the 177
Revised Code, no person elected to or employed by the General 178
Assembly or employed by any legislative agency shall sell or agree 179
to sell, except through competitive bidding, any goods or services 180
to the General Assembly or any department, division, institution, 181
instrumentality, board, commission, or bureau of the state, 182
excluding the courts. 183

(B) No member or employee of the General Assembly or employee 184
of any legislative agency shall knowingly accept any of the 185
following from a legislative agent: 186

(1) The payment of any expenses for travel or lodging except 187
as otherwise authorized by division (H) of section 102.03 of the 188
Revised Code; 189

(2) More than seventy-five dollars aggregated per calendar 190
year as payment for meals and other food and beverages, other than 191
for those meals and other food and beverages provided to the 192
member or employee at a meeting at which the member or employee 193
participates in a panel, seminar, or speaking engagement, at a 194
meeting or convention of a national organization to which either 195
house of the General Assembly or any state agency, including, but 196
not limited to, any legislative agency or state institution of 197
higher education as defined in section 3345.011 of the Revised 198
Code, pays membership dues, or at a dinner, party, or function to 199
which all members of the General Assembly or all members of either 200
house of the General Assembly are invited. 201

(C) No member or employee of the General Assembly or employee 202
of any legislative agency shall knowingly accept from a 203
legislative agent a gift of any amount in the form of cash or the 204
equivalent of cash, or a gift or gifts of any other thing of value 205

where the value of the gift or gifts aggregated per calendar year 206
exceeds seventy-five dollars. As used in this division, "gift" 207
does not include any contribution as defined in section 3517.01 of 208
the Revised Code or any gifts of meals and other food and 209
beverages or the payment of expenses incurred for travel to 210
destinations either inside or outside this state that is received 211
by a member of the General Assembly and that is incurred in 212
connection with the member's official duties. 213

(D) It is not a violation of division (B)(2) of this section 214
if, within sixty days after receiving notice pursuant to division 215
(F)(2) of section 101.73 of the Revised Code from a legislative 216
agent that the legislative agent has provided a member of the 217
General Assembly or an employee of the General Assembly or any 218
legislative agency with more than seventy-five dollars aggregated 219
in a calendar year as payment for meals and other food and 220
beverages that were purchased for consumption on the premises in 221
which the food and beverages were sold, the member or employee of 222
the General Assembly or employee of any legislative agency returns 223
to that legislative agent the amount received that exceeds 224
seventy-five dollars. 225

SECTION 6. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION 226

No present or former member or employee of the General 227
Assembly or present or former employee of any legislative agency 228
shall disclose or use for the member's or employee's personal 229
profit, without appropriate authorization, any information 230
acquired by the member or employee in the course of the member's 231
or employee's official duties that has been clearly designated to 232
the member or employee as confidential when such confidential 233
designation is warranted because of the status of the proceedings 234
or the circumstances under which the information was received and 235
preserving its confidentiality is necessary to the proper conduct 236
of government business. No present or former member or employee of 237

the General Assembly or present or former employee of any 238
legislative agency shall disclose or use, without appropriate 239
authorization, any information acquired by the member or employee 240
in the course of the member's or employee's official duties that 241
is confidential because of statutory provisions, except as 242
provided in section 101.30 of the Revised Code or Section 12 or 13 243
of Article II, Ohio Constitution. 244

SECTION 7. IMPROPER INFLUENCE 245

(A) No member or employee of the General Assembly or employee 246
of any legislative agency shall use or attempt to use or authorize 247
the use of the authority or influence of the member's or 248
employee's office or employment to secure anything of value or the 249
promise or offer of anything of value that is of such a character 250
as to manifest a substantial and improper influence upon the 251
member or employee with respect to the member's or employee's 252
duties. 253

(B) No member or employee of the General Assembly or employee 254
of any legislative agency shall solicit or accept anything of 255
value that is of such a character as to manifest a substantial and 256
improper influence upon the member or employee with respect to the 257
member's or employee's duties. 258

(C) No member of the General Assembly shall solicit or 259
receive funds from any legislative agent who is registered 260
pursuant to section 101.72 of the Revised Code, for use other than 261
by a political party, campaign committee, legislative campaign 262
fund, political action committee, or political contributing 263
entity, as defined in section 3517.01 of the Revised Code, except 264
that a member may solicit or receive funds from any legislative 265
agent on behalf of religious and benevolent organizations 266
regulated by Chapter 1716. of the Revised Code or charitable 267
organizations that have registered with the Attorney General 268
pursuant to section 109.26 or 1716.02 of the Revised Code. 269

(D) In the absence of bribery or another offense under the Revised Code or a purpose to defraud, the receipt of contributions, as defined in section 3517.01 of the Revised Code, made to a campaign committee, political party, legislative campaign fund, political action committee, or political contributing entity on behalf of a member of or candidate for the General Assembly does not violate divisions (A) and (B) of this section.

(E) A member or employee of the General Assembly and an employee of any legislative agency may accept travel, meals, and lodging or expenses or reimbursement of expenses for travel, meals, and lodging in connection with conferences, seminars, and similar events related to the member's or employee's official duties if the travel, meals, lodging, expenses, or reimbursement is not of such a character as to manifest a substantial and improper influence upon the member or employee with respect to those duties and if, in relation to expenses or reimbursement for travel or lodging provided to a member by a legislative agent, the expenses or reimbursement are not made in violation of division (C)(1) of section 102.031 of the Revised Code. A member or employee who acts in compliance with this division does not violate division (A), (B), or (C) of this section.

SECTION 8. STAFF USE

(A) A member of the General Assembly shall utilize General Assembly employees only for the official purposes for which they are employed.

(B)(1) In accordance with section 3517.092 of the Revised Code, no member of or candidate for the General Assembly, no campaign committee of a member of or candidate for the General Assembly, no legislative caucus campaign committee, and no other person or entity shall knowingly solicit or accept a contribution on behalf of that member or candidate, that member's or

candidate's campaign committee, or a legislative caucus campaign 302
committee from any of the following: 303

(a) A state employee whose appointing authority is the member 304
of the General Assembly; 305

(b) A state employee whose appointing authority is authorized 306
or required by law to be appointed by the member of the General 307
Assembly; 308

(c) A state employee who functions in or is employed by the 309
Ohio Senate, the Ohio House of Representatives, or any legislative 310
agency; 311

(d) A state employee at the time of the solicitation, whose 312
appointing authority will be the candidate for the General 313
Assembly, if elected; 314

(e) A state employee at the time of the solicitation, whose 315
appointing authority will be appointed by the candidate for the 316
General Assembly, if elected, as authorized or required by law; 317

(f) A state employee at the time of the solicitation, who 318
will function in or be employed in or by the same public agency, 319
department, division, or office as the candidate for the General 320
Assembly, if elected. 321

(2) As used in this section, "contribution" does not include 322
services provided by individuals volunteering a portion of their 323
time on behalf of a campaign. 324

(C) In addition to any complaint brought or penalty that may 325
be imposed under sections 3517.152 to 3517.157 of the Revised 326
Code, the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may receive and 327
initiate complaints against members and employees of, and 328
candidates for, the General Assembly and employees of any 329
legislative agency concerning conduct alleged to be in violation 330
of this section. Upon a finding of a violation of this section, 331

the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may recommend whatever 332
sanction is appropriate with respect to a particular member, 333
employee, or candidate as will best maintain in the minds of the 334
public a good opinion of the conduct and character of members and 335
employees of the General Assembly. 336

SECTION 9. SEPARATION OF FUNDS 337

(A) No member of or candidate for the General Assembly shall 338
convert, receive, or accept for personal or business use anything 339
of value from the member's or candidate's campaign fund, as 340
defined in section 3517.01 of the Revised Code, including, without 341
limitation, payments to the member or candidate for services 342
personally performed by the member or candidate, except as 343
reimbursement for any of the following: 344

(1) Legitimate and verifiable prior campaign expenses 345
incurred by the member or candidate; 346

(2) Legitimate and verifiable, ordinary, and necessary prior 347
expenses incurred by the member or candidate in connection with 348
duties as the holder of a public office, including, without 349
limitation, expenses incurred through participation in nonpartisan 350
or bipartisan events where the participation of the holder of a 351
public office would normally be expected; 352

(3) Legitimate and verifiable, ordinary, and necessary prior 353
expenses incurred by a member or candidate while doing any of the 354
following: 355

(a) Engaging in activities in support of or opposition to 356
another candidate, political party, or ballot issue; 357

(b) Raising funds for a political party, political action 358
committee, campaign committee, legislative campaign fund, 359
political contributing entity, or other candidate; 360

(c) Participating in the activities of a political party, 361

political action committee, legislative campaign fund, political 362
contributing entity, or campaign committee; 363

(d) Attending a political party convention or other political 364
meeting. 365

(B) For purposes of division (A) of this section, an expense 366
is incurred whenever a member or candidate has either made payment 367
or is obligated to make payment, as by the use of a credit card or 368
other credit procedure, or by the use of goods or services 369
received on account. 370

(C) No member of or candidate for the General Assembly shall 371
knowingly receive or accept reimbursement for an expense under 372
division (A) of this section to the extent that the expense 373
previously was reimbursed or paid from another source of funds. If 374
an expense is reimbursed under division (A) of this section and is 375
later paid or reimbursed, wholly or in part, from another source 376
of funds, a member or candidate shall immediately repay the 377
reimbursement received under division (A) of this section to the 378
extent of the payment made or reimbursement received from the 379
other source. 380

(D) A member of the General Assembly may be reimbursed under 381
division (A)(1) or (3) of this section for expenses incurred for 382
the member's meals and lodging in Franklin County if the expenses 383
otherwise meet the requirements for reimbursement under division 384
(A)(1) or (3) of this section and were not incurred while the 385
member was in Franklin County to attend floor sessions of the 386
General Assembly or meetings of its committees, except that a 387
member may be reimbursed under division (A)(1), (2), or (3) of 388
this section for expenses incurred for the member's meals in 389
Franklin County at any time if the expenses otherwise meet the 390
requirements for reimbursement under division (A)(1), (2), or (3) 391
of this section and were incurred for meals at which the member 392
hosted other persons. 393

(E) No member of or candidate for the General Assembly shall 394
accept for personal or business use anything of value from a 395
political party, political action committee, legislative campaign 396
fund, political contributing entity, or campaign committee other 397
than the member's or candidate's own campaign committee, except 398
for the following: 399

(1) Reimbursement for legitimate and verifiable, ordinary, 400
and necessary prior expenses not otherwise prohibited by law 401
incurred by the member or candidate while engaged in any 402
legitimate activity of the political party, political action 403
committee, legislative campaign fund, political contributing 404
entity, or such campaign committee. Without limitation, 405
reimbursable expenses under this division include those incurred 406
while doing any of the following: 407

(a) Engaging in activities in support of or opposition to 408
another candidate, political party, or ballot issue; 409

(b) Raising funds for a political party, campaign committee, 410
legislative campaign fund, or another candidate; 411

(c) Attending a political party convention or other political 412
meeting. 413

(2) Compensation not otherwise prohibited by law for actual 414
and valuable personal services rendered under a written contract 415
to the political party, political action committee, legislative 416
campaign fund, political contributing entity, or the member's or 417
candidate's own campaign committee for any legitimate activity of 418
the political party, political action committee, legislative 419
campaign fund, political contributing entity, or such campaign 420
committee. 421

Reimbursable expenses under this division do not include, and 422
it is a violation of this division for a member or candidate to 423
accept from a political party, political action committee, 424

legislative campaign fund, political contributing entity, or 425
campaign committee other than the member's or candidate's own 426
campaign committee, anything of value for activities primarily 427
related to the member's or candidate's own campaign for election, 428
except for contributions to the member's or candidate's campaign 429
committee. 430

For purposes of this division, an expense is incurred 431
whenever a member or candidate has either made payment or is 432
obligated to make payment, as by the use of a credit card or other 433
credit procedure, or by the use of goods or services received on 434
account. 435

(F)(1) Divisions (A) and (C) of this section do not prohibit 436
a member's or candidate's campaign committee from making a direct 437
advance or post payment from the member's or candidate's campaign 438
fund to vendors for goods and services for which reimbursement is 439
permitted under division (A) of this section, except that no 440
campaign committee shall pay a member or candidate for services 441
personally performed by the member or the candidate. 442

(2) When any expense that may be reimbursed under division 443
(A), (C), or (E) of this section is part of other expenses that 444
may not be paid or reimbursed, the separation of the two types of 445
expenses for the purpose of allocating for payment or 446
reimbursement those expenses that may be paid or reimbursed may be 447
by any reasonable accounting method, considering all of the 448
surrounding circumstances. 449

(3) For purposes of divisions (A), (C), and (E) of this 450
section, mileage allowance at a rate not greater than that allowed 451
by the Internal Revenue Service at the time the travel occurs may 452
be paid instead of reimbursement for actual travel expenses 453
allowable. 454

(G) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee shall report 455

violations of this section to the Elections Commission pursuant to 456
division (E)(1) of Section 13 of this Code of Ethics. 457

SECTION 10. HONORARIA AND TESTIMONIALS 458

(A) No member of the General Assembly, employee of the 459
General Assembly who is required to file a financial disclosure 460
statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code, or employee of 461
any legislative agency who is required to file a financial 462
disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code 463
shall solicit or accept an honorarium. This division and divisions 464
(A), (B), and (C) of Section 7 of this Code of Ethics do not 465
prohibit a member or employee who is required to file a financial 466
disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code from 467
accepting the payment of actual travel expenses, including any 468
expenses incurred in connection with the travel for lodging, and 469
meals, food, and beverages provided to the member or employee at a 470
meeting at which the member or employee participates in a panel, 471
seminar, or speaking engagement or provided to the member or 472
employee at a meeting or convention of a national organization to 473
which either house of the General Assembly, or any state agency, 474
including, but not limited to, any legislative agency or state 475
institution of higher education as defined in section 3345.011 of 476
the Revised Code, pays membership dues. This division and 477
divisions (A), (B), and (C) of Section 7 of this Code of Ethics do 478
not prohibit an employee of the General Assembly or employee of 479
any legislative agency who is not required to file a financial 480
disclosure statement under section 102.02 of the Revised Code from 481
accepting an honorarium or the payment of travel, meal, and 482
lodging expenses if the honorarium, expenses, or both were paid in 483
recognition of demonstrable business, professional, or esthetic 484
interests of the employee that exist apart from the employee's 485
public employment, including, but not limited to, such a 486
demonstrable interest in public speaking and were not paid by any 487

person or other entity, or by any representative or association of 488
such person or entities, that is regulated by, doing business 489
with, or seeking to do business with the General Assembly or any 490
legislative agency. 491

(B) No member of the General Assembly shall conduct a public 492
or private fund raising event that seeks to provide money for the 493
member's personal use. 494

(C) As used in this section, "honorarium" means any payment 495
made in consideration for any speech given, article published, or 496
attendance at any public or private conference, convention, 497
meeting, social event, meal, or similar gathering. "Honorarium" 498
does not include ceremonial gifts or awards that have 499
insignificant monetary value; unsolicited gifts of nominal value 500
or trivial items of informational value; or earned income from any 501
person, other than a legislative agent, for personal services that 502
are customarily provided in connection with the practice of a bona 503
fide business, if that business initially began before the member 504
or employee conducting that business was elected or appointed to 505
the member's or employee's office or position of employment. 506

SECTION 11. IMPROPER INDUCEMENT 507

If any person attempts to induce a member or employee of or 508
candidate for the General Assembly or employee of any legislative 509
agency to violate any provision of this Code of Ethics, the 510
member, employee, or candidate shall report the matter to the 511
Joint Legislative Ethics Committee. 512

SECTION 12. ADVISORY BODY 513

(A) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may recommend 514
legislation relating to ethics, conflicts of interest, and 515
financial disclosure and, upon a vote of a majority of its 516
members, may render advisory opinions with regard to questions 517
concerning these matters for members and employees of and 518

candidates for the General Assembly and for employees of any 519
legislative agency. 520

(B) When the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee renders an 521
advisory opinion that has been publicly sought and that relates to 522
a special set of circumstances involving ethics, conflicts of 523
interest, or financial disclosure under Chapter 102. or section 524
2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, the person to whom the 525
opinion was directed or who was similarly situated may reasonably 526
rely upon such opinion and shall be immune from criminal 527
prosecutions, civil suits, or actions for removal from the 528
person's office or position of employment for a violation of 529
Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code 530
based on facts and circumstances covered by the opinion, if the 531
opinion states that there is no violation of Chapter 102. or 532
section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code. The committee 533
shall include in every advisory opinion it renders a statement as 534
to whether the set of circumstances described in the advisory 535
opinion constitutes a violation of section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of 536
the Revised Code. When the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee 537
renders an opinion that has been publicly sought, the advisory 538
opinion is a public record available under section 149.43 of the 539
Revised Code. 540

(C) When the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee renders a 541
written opinion that has been privately sought and that relates to 542
a special set of circumstances involving ethics, conflicts of 543
interest, or financial disclosure under Chapter 102. or section 544
2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, the written opinion does 545
not have the legal effect of an advisory opinion issued under 546
division (B) of this section. When the Joint Legislative Ethics 547
Committee renders a written opinion that has been privately 548
sought, the written opinion is not a public record available under 549
section 149.43 of the Revised Code. 550

The person to whom a written opinion is issued under this 551
division may request the committee to issue the written opinion as 552
an advisory opinion. The person may make the request at any time 553
within thirty days after the written opinion is issued and prior 554
to committing any proposed action discussed in the written 555
opinion. Upon receiving a timely request and with the approval of 556
a majority of the members of the committee, the committee may 557
issue the written opinion as an advisory opinion. If the committee 558
issues the written opinion as an advisory opinion, the advisory 559
opinion has the same legal effect as an advisory opinion issued 560
under division (B) of this section and is a public record 561
available under section 149.43 of the Revised Code. If the person 562
commits any proposed action discussed in the written opinion 563
before the committee issues the written opinion as an advisory 564
opinion, the advisory opinion grants no immunity to the person 565
regarding any action that is discussed in the written opinion and 566
that the person commits before the committee issues the written 567
opinion as an advisory opinion. 568

(D) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee shall issue an 569
advisory opinion under division (B) of this section or a written 570
opinion under division (C) of this section, whether it is publicly 571
or privately sought, only at a meeting of the committee and only 572
with the approval of a majority of the members of the committee. 573

(E) All requests for an opinion shall be submitted in writing 574
by the member or employee of or candidate for the General Assembly 575
or employee of any legislative agency who desires the opinion and 576
shall state in the request whether the opinion is being publicly 577
or privately sought. If the request fails to state whether the 578
opinion is being publicly or privately sought, the committee shall 579
consider the opinion to be privately sought. The committee shall 580
issue in writing all advisory opinions that have been publicly 581
sought, appropriately number them, and make them available for 582

public inspection. The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee shall 583
conduct all of its proceedings surrounding the rendering of an 584
opinion so as to protect the confidentiality of those named in the 585
request for the opinion. 586

SECTION 13. CONSIDERATION AND HEARING OF COMPLAINTS 587

(A)(1) The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee shall receive, 588
and may initiate, complaints concerning breach of privilege and 589
complaints against members and employees of and candidates for the 590
General Assembly and employees of any legislative agency 591
concerning conduct alleged to be misconduct, a violation of 592
Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, 593
this Code of Ethics, or the House or Senate rules. All complaints 594
except those by the committee shall be by affidavit made on 595
personal knowledge, subject to the penalties of perjury. A 596
complaint by the committee shall be by affidavit, based upon facts 597
that constitute reasonable cause to believe that a breach of 598
privilege, misconduct, or a violation of the House or Senate 599
rules, this Code of Ethics, or Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 600
2921.43 of the Revised Code, has occurred. The complaint shall not 601
contain innuendo, speculative assertions, or conclusory 602
statements. 603

At the first meeting of the committee in each calendar year, 604
the chairperson of the committee for that year shall appoint an 605
investigation subcommittee. The subcommittee shall consist of the 606
chairperson of the committee for that year and a member of the 607
committee who is a member of the chamber and political party of 608
which the chairperson is not a member. This subcommittee shall 609
have the authority to issue subpoenas regarding complaints 610
referred to it and approve depositions by the Office of the 611
Legislative Inspector General. 612

(2) A complaint other than a complaint by the committee shall 613
be filed with the executive director of the Office of the 614

Legislative Inspector General of the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee. Upon receiving the complaint, the executive director or the executive director's designee shall gather, if necessary, preliminary facts surrounding the complaint for presentation to the chairperson or committee. Thereafter, the executive director shall seal the complaint and deliver it to the chairperson of the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee. A complaint by the committee shall be drafted by the legal counsel of the Office of the Legislative Inspector General, and, if at least eight members of the committee approve the draft complaint, the draft complaint shall be a complaint by the committee and shall be filed with the Office of the Legislative Inspector General and delivered to the chairperson of the committee.

Within fourteen days after the filing of a complaint by a complainant, the chairperson shall notify the complainant that the complaint has been filed with the committee, that all further proceedings of the committee are confidential, that the committee is required to dismiss the complaint if it is not disposed of within six months after the complaint is filed, and that, if a report dealing with the complaint has not been published in the House or Senate Journal, as appropriate, within that time, the complaint has been dismissed because no violation was found to have been committed by the accused person. Within fourteen days after the filing of any complaint, the chairperson shall deliver a copy of the complaint to the accused person and shall notify the accused person that the accused person may file, within twenty days after receiving the copy, a written response to the complaint with the executive director of the Office of the Legislative Inspector General and, if desired, may file in addition to the written response a request to appear personally before the committee to answer to the complaint. The executive director immediately shall seal the written response to the complaint, the request, or both and deliver the written response, the request, or

both to the chairperson. 648

Within forty-five days after the filing of any complaint and 649
at least twenty days after the chairperson has delivered a copy of 650
the complaint to the accused person, the chairperson shall convene 651
a meeting of the committee regarding the complaint. If at least 652
eight members of the committee find that the complaint before the 653
committee is not frivolous and that the facts alleged constitute 654
on their face a breach of privilege, misconduct, a violation of 655
this Code of Ethics or the House or Senate Rules, or a violation 656
of Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, 657
the committee shall refer the complaint to the Office of the 658
Legislative Inspector General for further investigation and may 659
delegate to the investigation subcommittee appointed pursuant to 660
division (A)(1) of this section the authority to issue subpoenas 661
regarding a given complaint or other matter. The chairperson of 662
the committee shall notify the accused of the referral. Unless 663
eight members of the committee find that the complaint before the 664
committee alleges facts that, on their face, constitute a breach 665
of privilege, misconduct, a violation of this Code of Ethics or 666
the House or Senate Rules, or a violation of Chapter 102. or 667
sections 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, the committee 668
shall dismiss the complaint. 669

(B) The Office of the Legislative Inspector General shall 670
investigate each complaint referred to it by the committee and 671
shall investigate any other matters as directed by the committee. 672
The Office of the Legislative Inspector General may request 673
further information from the complainant, any person presenting 674
charges to the committee, the accused person if the information 675
sought is directly relevant to a complaint or charges received by 676
the committee pursuant to this section, and any other person it 677
believes may have information pertaining to the complaint or other 678
matter referred for investigation to the Office of the Legislative 679

Inspector General. It may request the committee to issue a 680
subpoena to obtain any necessary information. Upon the approval of 681
the investigation subcommittee appointed pursuant to division 682
(A)(1) of this section, the Office of the Legislative Inspector 683
General may depose any person. Any person interviewed or deposed 684
by the Office of the Legislative Inspector General may be 685
represented by an attorney. The substance of any request for 686
further information and the information provided pursuant to any 687
request are confidential. Except as otherwise provided in this 688
section, the person from whom information is requested shall not 689
divulge the substance of the committee's request to any person 690
other than the person's attorney and shall not divulge the 691
information provided in response to the request to any person 692
other than the person's attorney and any person necessary to 693
prepare the information for delivery to the committee. Except as 694
otherwise provided in this section, no attorney or person who 695
prepares information for delivery to the committee shall divulge 696
the substance of the committee's request or the information 697
provided in response to the request. 698

Upon the completion of an investigation based on a complaint 699
referred to the Office of the Legislative Inspector General, the 700
executive director, or the executive director's designee, shall 701
present to the committee the executive director's or designee's 702
preliminary findings with respect to the facts and evidence 703
gathered regarding the complaint. Upon receiving the preliminary 704
findings, the committee, upon a vote of at least eight members of 705
the committee, may refer the complaint back to the Office of the 706
Legislative Inspector General for further investigation, hold a 707
hearing pursuant to divisions (D) and (G) of this section, order 708
remedial action pursuant to division (D) of this section, or 709
dismiss the complaint. 710

Upon the completion of an investigation of any other matter 711

referred to the Office of the Legislative Inspector General, the 712
executive director or the executive director's designee shall 713
present to the committee the executive director's or designee's 714
preliminary findings with respect to the facts and evidence 715
gathered regarding the matter referred. Upon receiving the 716
preliminary findings, the committee, upon a vote of at least eight 717
members of the committee, may refer the matter back to the Office 718
of the Legislative Inspector General for further investigation, 719
request that a complaint be drafted by the legal counsel of the 720
Office of the Legislative Inspector General, terminate the 721
investigation, or hold a hearing pursuant to division (E) of this 722
section. 723

Before the fifth day of each month, the executive director of 724
the Office of the Legislative Inspector General shall make a 725
report, in writing, to the committee regarding the status of any 726
ongoing investigation that the committee referred to the Office of 727
the Legislative Inspector General. 728

(C) Before the committee takes any formal action against a 729
person who is the subject of an investigation based upon a 730
complaint filed with the committee, the committee shall consider 731
the complaint. 732

(D) The committee may defer action on a complaint against 733
members and employees of and candidates for the General Assembly 734
and employees of any legislative agency when the complaint alleges 735
conduct that at least eight members of the committee find reason 736
to believe is being reviewed by appropriate law enforcement or 737
regulatory authorities, or when at least eight members of the 738
committee determine that it is appropriate for the conduct alleged 739
in the complaint to be reviewed initially by law enforcement or 740
regulatory authorities. 741

(E)(1) If, in any case in which a complaint is filed with the 742
committee, at least eight members of the committee find that the 743

complaint is not frivolous and there is reasonable cause to 744
believe that the facts alleged in the complaint constitute a 745
breach of privilege, misconduct, or a violation of Chapter 102. or 746
section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, this Code of 747
Ethics, or the House or Senate Rules, the committee shall hold a 748
hearing. At the hearing, the legal counsel of the Office of the 749
Legislative Inspector General shall present to the committee the 750
case against the accused person, introduce evidence, call 751
witnesses, and cross-examine witnesses. The chairperson of the 752
committee shall make all rulings regarding procedure and the 753
admissibility of evidence. The hearing and all related proceedings 754
of the committee are absolutely confidential as provided under 755
this Code of Ethics and section 102.06 of the Revised Code. No 756
member or employee of the committee, person who staffs or 757
otherwise serves the committee, witness, or other person shall 758
divulge any information about the hearing or related proceedings, 759
except that a witness and the complainant may consult with an 760
attorney before and after the hearing and any related proceeding, 761
any witness may be represented by an attorney while the witness is 762
being examined or cross-examined, the accused person may be 763
represented by an attorney at all stages of the proceedings, and 764
the attorney of the accused person may attend all hearings and 765
related proceedings of the committee. 766

(2) If, in any case in which a complaint is filed with the 767
committee, at least eight members of the committee find that the 768
complaint is frivolous or that there is no reasonable cause to 769
believe that the charge or complaint constitutes a breach of 770
privilege, misconduct, or a violation of Chapter 102. or section 771
2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, this Code of Ethics, or 772
the House or Senate Rules, the committee shall dismiss the 773
complaint and notify the accused person in writing of the 774
dismissal of the complaint. If the committee so dismisses the 775
complaint, the committee shall not issue a report of its findings 776

unless the accused person requests a report. If the accused person 777
requests a report, the committee shall issue a report in 778
accordance with division (F)(2) of this section. 779

(3) If, in any case in which a complaint is filed with the 780
committee, the committee finds by unanimous concurrence of its 781
membership that there is reasonable cause to believe that the 782
charges presented constitute a breach of privilege, misconduct, or 783
a violation of this Code of Ethics or the House or Senate Rules 784
but do not constitute a violation of Chapter 102. or section 785
2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code and also finds by unanimous 786
concurrence of its membership that the breach of privilege, 787
misconduct, or violation was in good faith and without wrongful 788
intent and the person has taken or will take suitable remedial 789
action, it may order the person to take any further remedial 790
action it considers necessary and, upon satisfaction that any 791
order it makes is complied with, terminate the investigation, with 792
the concurrence of the accused person. If an investigation is so 793
terminated, the committee shall not issue a report of its findings 794
unless the accused person requests a report. If the accused person 795
requests a report, the committee shall issue a report in 796
accordance with division (F)(2) of this section. If the accused 797
person fails to comply with an order of the committee, the 798
committee, upon concurrence of at least eight of its members, 799
shall proceed with the original complaint filed against the 800
person. 801

(F)(1) If, upon the basis of the hearing, at least eight 802
members of the committee find, based upon a preponderance of the 803
evidence, that the facts alleged in the complaint are true and 804
constitute a violation of Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 805
2921.43 of the Revised Code, the committee, upon concurrence of at 806
least eight of its members, shall order the Office of the 807
Legislative Inspector General to prepare a report of the 808

committee's findings to the appropriate prosecuting authority or 809
other appropriate body for proceedings in prosecution of the 810
violations and, in accordance with division (F)(1) of this 811
section, issue a report to the General Assembly recommending 812
reprimand, censure, expulsion, or other sanction the committee 813
considers appropriate. Upon acceptance by at least eight members 814
of the committee of the report to the appropriate prosecuting 815
authority or other appropriate body, the committee shall report 816
its findings to the appropriate prosecuting authority, the 817
Elections Commission, or other appropriate body. This report is 818
the investigative report described in division (E) of section 819
101.34 of the Revised Code and shall contain any findings of fact 820
and conclusions of law made by the committee. This report shall 821
not contain any papers, records, affidavits, or documents upon any 822
complaint, inquiry, or investigation relating to the proceedings 823
of the committee. If at least eight members of the committee find, 824
based upon a preponderance of the evidence, that the facts alleged 825
in the complaint are true and constitute a violation of division 826
(B) of section 102.031 of the Revised Code, the committee may 827
impose a fine of not more than one thousand dollars upon the 828
member. 829

(2) If, upon the basis of the hearing, at least eight members 830
of the committee find, based upon a preponderance of the evidence, 831
that a breach of privilege has been committed or that a member or 832
employee of or candidate for the General Assembly or employee of 833
any legislative agency has violated a provision of this Code of 834
Ethics or the House or Senate Rules that is not a violation of 835
Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, or 836
has committed misconduct, the committee, upon concurrence of at 837
least eight of its members and in accordance with division (F)(1) 838
of this section, may issue a report recommending reprimand, 839
censure, expulsion, or other sanction the committee considers 840
appropriate or, upon a finding by unanimous concurrence of its 841

membership that the breach of privilege, misconduct, or violation 842
was in good faith and without wrongful intent and the person has 843
taken or will take suitable remedial action, may order the person 844
to take any further remedial action it considers necessary and, 845
upon satisfaction that any order it makes is complied with, 846
dismiss the complaint without issuing a report of its findings, 847
unless the accused person requests a report. If the accused person 848
requests a report, the committee shall issue a report in 849
accordance with division (F)(2) of this section. If the person 850
fails to comply with an order of the committee, the committee, 851
upon concurrence of eight of its members, shall recommend some 852
sanction. 853

(3) If, upon the basis of the hearing, at least eight members 854
of the committee do not find, based upon a preponderance of the 855
evidence, that the facts alleged in a complaint constitute a 856
breach of privilege, misconduct, or a violation of Chapter 102. or 857
section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, this Code of 858
Ethics, or the House or Senate Rules, the committee shall dismiss 859
the complaint. The complaint shall also be dismissed if the 860
committee has not conducted a hearing within ninety days after the 861
complaint is filed with the committee, or if the committee has not 862
finally disposed of the complaint within six months after the 863
complaint is filed with the committee. The committee shall notify 864
the accused person in writing of the dismissal of the complaint. 865
The committee shall not issue a report of its findings unless the 866
accused person requests a report. If the accused person requests a 867
report, the committee shall issue a report in accordance with 868
division (F)(2) of this section. If the committee issues the 869
report, all evidence and the record of the hearing shall remain 870
confidential unless the accused person also requests that the 871
evidence and record be made public. Upon request by the accused 872
person, the committee shall make the evidence and the record 873
available for public inspection. 874

(G)(1) Any report of the committee that is issued pursuant to 875
division (E)(1) of this section and contains a finding that the 876
facts in the complaint are true and constitute a violation of 877
Chapter 102. or section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, or 878
that is issued pursuant to division (E)(2) of this section and 879
contains a finding that a breach of privilege, misconduct, or 880
violation of this Code of Ethics or the House or Senate Rules has 881
occurred and recommends reprimand, censure, expulsion, or another 882
appropriate sanction, shall be entered in the House Journal and 883
the Senate Journal. The House of Representatives and the Senate 884
shall vote on approval of any report entered in the House or 885
Senate Journal in accordance with this division. Concurrence of 886
two-thirds of the members of both the House and the Senate shall 887
be necessary for approval of the report, and, upon approval, any 888
recommended sanction shall be imposed immediately. 889

(2) If the investigation of the committee results in a 890
finding that a complaint that is filed is frivolous or that no 891
misconduct, breach of privilege, or violation of Chapter 102. or 892
section 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Revised Code, this Code of 893
Ethics, or the House or Senate Rules has been committed or if the 894
committee terminates an investigation or dismisses a complaint 895
pursuant to division (E)(2) or (3) of this section, the committee 896
shall not issue a report of its findings unless the accused person 897
requests a report. If the accused person requests a report, the 898
committee shall issue a report and publish it in the House 899
Journal, if the accused person is a member or employee of, or 900
candidate for, the House of Representatives, or the Senate 901
Journal, if the accused person is a member or employee of, or 902
candidate for, the Senate or an employee of any legislative 903
agency. A report published in the House or Senate Journal under 904
division (F)(2) of this section does not require a vote by the 905
House or Senate. 906

(H) A person against whom a complaint is filed shall be given 907
by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by personal 908
service reasonable notice of the date, time, and place of the 909
hearing and a statement of the charges and the law or provision 910
directly involved, and shall be granted the following rights: to 911
be represented by counsel, to have counsel appointed for the 912
person if the person is unable to afford counsel without undue 913
hardship, to examine the evidence against the person, to have 914
access to all information relative to the complaint that is in the 915
possession or knowledge of the committee or the Office of the 916
Legislative Inspector General, to produce evidence and to call and 917
subpoena witnesses in the person's defense, to confront the 918
person's accusers, to cross-examine witnesses, to have a 919
stenographic record made of the hearing, to have the hearing 920
follow the rules of evidence applicable to the courts of this 921
state, and to have the hearing closed to the public. A person, 922
with the approval of the committee, may waive any or all of such 923
rights by executing a written waiver and filing it with the 924
committee. 925

(I) The chairperson of the committee and the executive 926
director and chief legal counsel of the Office of the Legislative 927
Inspector General may administer oaths, and the committee or the 928
investigation subcommittee appointed pursuant to division (A)(1) 929
of this section may issue subpoenas to any person in the state 930
compelling the attendance of witnesses and the production of 931
relevant papers, books, accounts, and records. The committee or 932
the investigation subcommittee shall issue subpoenas to compel the 933
attendance of witnesses and the production of documents upon the 934
request of an accused person. Section 101.42 of the Revised Code 935
shall govern the issuance of such subpoenas insofar as applicable. 936
Upon the refusal of any person to obey a subpoena, be sworn, or 937
answer as a witness, the committee or the investigation 938
subcommittee may apply to the Court of Common Pleas of Franklin 939

County under section 2705.03 of the Revised Code. The court shall 940
hold proceedings in accordance with Chapter 2705. of the Revised 941
Code. The committee, the Office of the Legislative Inspector 942
General, or the accused person may take the depositions of 943
witnesses residing within or without the state in the same manner 944
as prescribed by law for the taking of depositions in civil 945
actions in the court of common pleas. 946

(J)(1) All complaints, papers, records, affidavits, and 947
documents upon any complaint, inquiry, or investigation relating 948
to the proceedings of the committee shall be sealed and are 949
private and confidential, except as otherwise provided in this 950
section. The substance of any charges received by the committee 951
and of any request made by the committee for further information, 952
any information received by the committee, all testimony and other 953
evidence presented during a hearing, and all committee discussions 954
are private and confidential, except as otherwise provided in this 955
section. No person serving on or employed in the service of the 956
committee, or employee of the Office of the Legislative Inspector 957
General who staffs or otherwise assists the committee or the 958
Office of the Legislative Inspector General employee who staffs 959
the committee shall divulge any of the following: 960

(a) Any matter concerning a complaint after it is filed with 961
the executive director of the Office of the Legislative Inspector 962
General; 963

(b) In the case of complaints initiated by the committee, any 964
matter concerning a complaint after the matter is under 965
investigation by the committee, whether before or after a 966
complaint is filed; 967

(c) Any other information that is made private and 968
confidential by this section. 969

(2) The requirement of confidentiality set forth in division 970

(I)(1) of this section includes without limitation divulging any matter to members or employees of the House or Senate or employees of any legislative agency who are not members of or assigned to the committee or to any employees of the Office of the Legislative Inspector General who are not assigned to staff the committee or do not assist any Office of the Legislative Inspector General employee assigned to staff the committee, but does not prevent any of the following:

(a) The issuance of a final report by the committee or any commentary upon the contents of the final report;

(b) Discussion of any complaint, request for an advisory opinion, charges presented to the committee, information related to a complaint, to an advisory opinion request, or to charges presented to the committee, proceedings of the committee, or other papers, records, affidavits, documents, or proceedings that are made private and confidential by this section between the members of the committee and any of the following:

(i) Any employees or staff of the committee;

(ii) Any employees of the General Assembly assigned to serve the committee, and any employee who serves as legal counsel for a caucus of the General Assembly;

(iii) Any employees of the Office of the Legislative Inspector General assigned to staff the committee;

(iv) Any other persons employed by or assigned to serve the committee.

(c) The preparation of any documents necessary for the operation of the committee by employees of the General Assembly assigned to the committee chairperson, employees of the General Assembly assigned to staff the committee, or employees of the Office of the Legislative Inspector General who assist the Office of the Legislative Inspector General employee assigned to staff

the committee, except that any confidentiality requirements of 1002
this section applicable to the members of the committee shall 1003
apply to the employees of the General Assembly, committee, or 1004
Office of the Legislative Inspector General who prepare those 1005
documents. 1006

(K) If a complaint filed with the committee alleges a 1007
violation by a member of the committee, the member against whom 1008
the allegation is made shall not vote on the matter. The committee 1009
shall conduct no business concerning complaints unless a majority 1010
of its members are present. 1011

(L) The committee shall deliver all notices and other 1012
documents by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by 1013
personal service. 1014

(M) Within fourteen days after the final disposition of a 1015
complaint, either by dismissal or by referral to the appropriate 1016
prosecuting authority, the committee shall notify the complainant 1017
of the dismissal or referral by certified mail, return receipt 1018
requested, or by personal service. 1019

SECTION 14. AMENDMENTS TO THE ETHICS CODE 1020

The Joint Legislative Ethics Committee may recommend 1021
amendments to this Code of Ethics at any time by proposing to the 1022
General Assembly a concurrent resolution containing the desired 1023
amendments. 1024

SECTION 15. DISTRIBUTION OF ETHICS CODE 1025

Each member and employee of the General Assembly and each 1026
employee of any legislative agency shall be given a copy of this 1027
Code of Ethics within ten days after its adoption. 1028

SECTION 16. APPLICATION TO 131st GENERAL ASSEMBLY 1029

The Code of Ethics for the 130th General Assembly shall be 1030
effective until the 131st General Assembly adopts the Code of 1031

Ethics for the 131st General Assembly.

1032