

State of Vermont

House of Representatives



Montpelier, Vermont

House Resolution

H.R. 19

House resolution amending the Rules and Orders of the House of Representatives related to House ethics

Offered by: Representative Gannon of Wilmington

Resolved by the House of Representatives:

That Rule 90(b) of the Rules and Orders of the House of Representatives be amended to read:

(b) Ethics

(1) Standards of ethical conduct. The House of Representatives, without qualification, is opposed to and prohibits violations of the Vermont Constitution and House Rules standards of ethical ~~behavior~~ conduct. This policy covers the conduct of Representatives and persons ~~that either the Speaker's or the Office of the Clerk of the House employs~~ employed in the Speaker's Office and House Clerk's Office.

(A) A member shall respect and comply with the law, these Rules, and any other standard of conduct applicable to the member in the performance of the member's duties in a manner that promotes public confidence in the integrity of the House.

(B) A member shall comply with 17 V.S.A. § 2414 (legislative candidate disclosure form).

(C) On or before the 10th day of the beginning of the biennium, each member shall submit to the Clerk a disclosure form prepared by the Clerk. The form shall be signed by the member, be publicly available on the official webpages of the House of Representatives and of the Clerk of the House, and may be updated. The form shall set forth, to the best of the member's ability, the following information applicable as of the date of submission:

(i) any boards, commissions, or similar entities that are regulated by law or that receive funding from the State on which the member serves; the member's position on the board, commission, or similar entity; and, except in the case of legislative appointments, whether the member receives any form of remuneration for that position; and

(ii) the member's employer.

(2) House Ethics Panel. The House Rules Committee shall, at the beginning of the biennium, appoint an Ethics Panel composed of five members of the House who shall serve until successors are appointed.

~~(3)(A)~~ The Panel shall elect its a chair, adopt procedures to implement this policy, and conduct its business to implement the provisions of this ethics rule, and provide copies of the policy set forth in this rule and the adopted procedures to all members of the House and employees of the Speaker's and the Office of the Clerk of the House person's employed in the Speaker's Office and House Clerk's Office. The Panel may meet remotely ~~to debate and vote on issues designated confidential under its adopted procedures~~ *during adjournment to consider complaints as set forth in the Panel Procedure for Handling Ethics Complaints.*

~~(4)(B)~~ The Panel shall advise individual members and provide training to all members on House member standards of ethical conduct, including compliance with House Rule 75.

~~(5)(C)~~ The Panel shall receive and investigate complaints of alleged ethical violations of House member standards of ethical conduct made against members of the House, and may investigate such alleged violations on its own initiative.

(i) The Panel, by a vote of at least four of its members, may subpoena the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of documents and other items as it deems necessary to conduct an investigation.

(ii) In the case of a Panel member's recusal or other absence during the Panel's review of a complaint, the House Rules Committee may appoint an ad hoc member to the Panel for that matter, upon request of the Chair of the Panel.

~~(6)(D)~~ The Panel may recommend to the House any disciplinary action against a member for an ethical violation.

(E) Annually, on or before December 31, the Panel shall report to the House the number of complaints filed, the disposition of those complaints, and the number of member requests for ethical advice.

~~(7)(3)~~ Retaliation prohibited. These Rules prohibit retaliation against a person who complains, reports, or cooperates in an investigation of an ethics violation.

~~(8)~~ Annually, on or before December 31, the Ethics Panel shall report to the House the number of complaints filed, the disposition of those complaints, and the number of member requests for ethical advice., and be it further

Resolved: That Rule 14a of the Rules and Orders of the House of Representatives (member disclosure form) be repealed.