1	H.1
2	Introduced by Representatives LaLonde of South Burlington, Cina of
3	Burlington, Ode of Burlington, and Sibilia of Dover
4	Referred to Committee on
5	Date:
6	Subject: Executive; governmental ethics; State Ethics Commission; procedure
7	for accepting and referring ethics complaints
8	Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to exempt the
9	House and Senate Ethics Panels from the requirement to consult with the
10	Executive Director of the State Ethics Commission on any complaint referred
11	to the Panels by the Commission.
12 13	An act relating to accepting and referring complaints by the State Ethics Commission
14	It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:
15	Sec. 1. REPEAL
16	2024 Acts and Resolves No. 171, Sec. 9 (3 V.S.A. § 1223) is repealed.
17	Sec. 2. 3 V.S.A. § 1223 is amended to read:
18	§ 1223. PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING ACCEPTING AND REFERRING
19	COMPLAINTS
20	* * *

1	(b) Preliminary review by Executive Director. The Executive Director
2	shall conduct a preliminary review of complaints made to the Commission in
3	order to take action as set forth in this subsection, which shall include referring
4	complaints to all relevant entities, including the Commission itself.
5	* * *

(5) Municipal Code of Ethics. If the complaint alleges a violation of the Municipal Code of Ethics, the Executive Director shall refer the complaint to the designated ethics liaison of the appropriate municipality.

- (5)(6) Closures. The Executive Director shall close any complaint that he or she the Executive Director does not refer as set forth in subdivisions (1)–(4)(5) of this subsection.
- (c) Consultation on unethical conduct. If the Executive Director refers a complaint under subsection (b) of this section, the Executive Director shall signify any likely unethical conduct described in the complaint. Any entity receiving a referred complaint, except those in subdivisions (b)(5) and (b)(4)(A)–(B) of this section, shall consult with the Commission regarding the application of the State Code of Ethics to facts presented in the complaint. The consultation shall be in writing and occur within 60 days after an entity receives a referred complaint and prior to the entity making a determination on the complaint, meaning either closing a complaint without further investigation or issuing findings following an investigation.

1	(d) Confidentiality. Complaints and related documents in the custody of
2	the Commission shall be exempt from public inspection and copying under the
3	Public Records Act and kept confidential, except as provided for in section
4	1231 of this title.
5	Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATES
5	This act shall take effect on passage, except that Sec. 2 (amending 3 V.S.A.
7	§ 1223) shall take effect on September 1, 2025.