



**STATE OF VERMONT**  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
HOUSE ETHICS PANEL

**2025–2026 Registry of Closure Reports**

*Pursuant to [House Rule 90\(b\)\(2\)\(F\)](#)*

February 12, 2026; 2026-01 Closure Report.

This complaint alleged that a Representative, in the course of advocating policy, made public statements and publicly shared information that caused harm to a group of individuals that would be impacted by that policy. The complaint also referenced bills introduced by the Representative related to the policy at issue. The Representative responded that the Representative’s actions encompassed the core legislative functions of advocating for and legislating on public policy, and those actions were not directed at any individuals specifically; that the Representative shared information the Representative thought was well-researched and relevant to the policy at issue; and that the Representative’s statements were protected political speech. The Panel found there were no reasonable grounds to believe an ethical violation occurred because the Panel found no instances that the Representative was targeting or harassing individuals, and instead found that the Representative’s conduct was within the scope of legislative duties, and that the Representative engaged in political speech that is protected under the First Amendment, which provides legislators with the widest latitude to express views on public policy, including when it might be controversial or unpopular.

September 17, 2025; 2025-05 Closure Report.

This complaint alleged that two Representatives violated their legislative oath of office, an individual’s constitutional rights, and the Municipal Code of Ethics by denying the individual’s reappointment to several municipal positions in the Representatives’ capacities as municipal officers as punishment for the individual’s communication with

the Representatives about legislation within the purview of the General Assembly. The Representatives denied that they refused to support the individual's reappointment in retaliation for the individual's comments. The Panel found that there were no reasonable grounds to believe an ethical violation occurred because the Representatives were exercising their authority as municipal officers to determine municipal appointments. In addition, the Panel lacks authority to determine on behalf of a municipality whether a municipal officer violated municipal ethics; questions of municipal ethics violations are to be determined by the relevant municipality in accordance with the [Municipal Code of Ethics](#). The Panel accordingly closed the complaint.

August 18, 2025; 2025-04 Closure Report.

This complaint alleged that a Representative violated statute and House Rules by not allowing the Complainant or other members of the public to testify at a committee hearing held with a State entity in accordance with statutory law regarding that State entity's statutory obligations. The Representative denied that either statute or House Rules required the taking of public testimony at that hearing; advised that in consultation with counsel, the understood intent of the applicable law was to take testimony from that State entity; and further advised that the Complainant was invited to submit written testimony, but declined to do so. The Panel found that there were no reasonable grounds to believe that an ethical violation occurred because statute does not control legislative procedure, the Representative reasonably relied on legal advice confirming the Representative's understood intent of the applicable law, and the invitation to submit written testimony conformed to standards of House procedure, and therefore closed the complaint.

July 21, 2025; 2025-02 and -03 Closure Reports.

These two complaints by separate Complainants relate to the same allegation that an instance of a Representative's social media activity in regard to one of the Complainants violated standards of conduct expected of a legislator. In addition, the

second Complainant alleged that the Representative's interactions with the Complainant at a public meeting violated expected standards of conduct. The Representative denied that the Representative's actions constituted an ethical violation. The Panel reviewed the relevant records, including social media posts and a recording of the public meeting. The Panel determined there were no reasonable grounds to believe an ethical violation occurred at the public meeting, and further determined that the social media activity did not rise to the level of providing reasonable grounds to believe that an ethical violation occurred. The Representative's communications in the social media posts and in the public meeting are protected by the Representative's First Amendment rights of speech and association. House members do not lose these rights by holding legislative office. Although the Panel did not conclude that there were reasonable grounds to believe that an ethical violation occurred, it cautioned the Representative about the negative impact that online behavior can have on public confidence in the integrity of the House. The Panel accordingly closed both complaints.

April 30, 2025; 2025-01 Closure Report.

This complaint alleged that a Representative directed unethical conduct and engaged in the appearance of unethical conduct by encouraging the disruption of a meeting. The Representative denied the allegations. The Panel found there were no reasonable grounds to believe an ethical violation occurred because there was no indication the Representative encouraged the disruption or was otherwise involved in it, and therefore closed the complaint.

April 18, 2025; 2024-03 Closure Report.

This complaint alleged that a Representative targeted another legislator with harassing and demeaning conduct on multiple occasions. The Representative admitted to a portion of the alleged conduct, acknowledged it was wrong, and apologized therefor. The Panel determined there were reasonable grounds to believe that an ethical violation occurred and issued a Warning to the Representative, entered into a Stipulation and

Consent Order with the Representative that included a restorative process, which the Representative successfully completed, and the Panel accordingly dismissed the complaint.