

Comparison of Ethics Commission Budgets and Staffs
Presented by Thomas Jones on behalf of the Vermont Ethics Commission

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Thank you for the opportunity to present information that might assist the Committee. Below are three comparisons for the Committee's consideration. The first compares the allocated budgets for Ethics Commissions in New England states (New Hampshire does not have an Ethics Commission), as well as the number of staff members in those offices.

The second comparison is of those states who – like Vermont – have established their Ethics Commissions within the past ten years. This is intended to highlight the comparative trajectories of other newly-founded offices.

The third chart attempts to normalize the data by measuring the states' government employee populations against the number of staff members at the Commission. This comparison is used to attempt a rough estimate of how many government employees each staff member might be responsible for. In states where the Commission also handles municipal ethics, I have included the municipal employee population in the estimate.¹

Comparison 1 – Vermont Ethics Commission Budget Compared to Other New England States

New England States with Ethics Commissions	Commission	FY2024	FY2025	Staff
Vermont	State Ethics Commission	\$ 189,427.00	\$ 210,353.00	1
Connecticut	Office of State Ethics	\$ 1,835,050.00	\$ 1,964,230.00	16
Maine*†	Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices	\$ 4,599,764.00	\$ 3,061,839.00	7
Massachusetts	State Ethics Commission	\$ 3,402,531.00	\$ 3,664,121.00	30
Rhode Island	State Ethics Commission	\$ 2,137,059.00	\$ 2,234,502.00	12

Comparison 2 – Vermont Ethics Commission Budget Compared to States with New Commissions

States with New Ethics Commissions (past 10 years)	Commission	FY2024	FY2025	Staff
Vermont	State Ethics Commission	\$ 189,427.00	\$ 210,353.00	1
Wisconsin	State Ethics Commission (formed 2016)	\$ 1,577,120.00	\$ 1,870,350.00	8
New Mexico	Ethics Commission (formed 2018)	\$ 1,681,400.00	\$ 1,807,300.00	9
North Dakota [~]	Ethics Commission (formed 2018)	\$ 1,041,374.00	\$ 1,315,668.00	3
New York	Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government (2022)	\$ 8,066,000.00	\$ 9,160,000.00	68

Obviously, the two charts do not take into account all variables (e.g., size of state; number of state employees, etc.). However, it is worth note of the states that – like Vermont – have jurisdiction over municipal governments:

¹ The numbers are derived from United States Census Bureaus survey from 2024 (the most recent survey). See <https://data.census.gov/>

Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New Mexico. The staffs of these states include employees who attend solely to municipal needs. The next comparison takes this last point into consideration.

Comparison 3 – Vermont Ethics Commission Staff for Each Regulated Employee Compared to Other New England Commissions

New England States with Ethics Commissions	Commission	Staff	State Employees	Municipal Employees	Total Employees	Comm'n Staff	Gov. Employees per Each Comm'n Staff
Vermont	State Ethics Commission	1	16,437	29,504	45,941	1	45,941
Connecticut	Office of State Ethics	16	72,586	No jurisdiction	72,586	16	4,537
Maine*†	Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices	7	26,795	No jurisdiction	26,795	7	3,828
Massachusetts	State Ethics Commission	30	131,430	289,497	420,927	30	14,031
Rhode Island	State Ethics Commission	12	25,620	29,719	55,339	12	4,612

Thank you again for the opportunity to share this with you. I am happy to take any questions you may have.