

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 20

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1999 Regular Session
9lr2023
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By: **Delegate Taylor**

Introduced and read first time: February 19, 1999

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

Re-referred to: Commerce and Government Matters, February 24, 1999

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 22, 1999

RESOLUTION NO. _____

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Ethics Law - Study Commission on Lobbyist Ethics**

3 FOR the purpose of creating a Study Commission on Lobbyist Ethics; providing for
4 the appointment of the Commission; specifying the duties of the Commission;
5 requiring the Commission to issue a certain report by a certain date; providing
6 for the termination of the Commission; and generally relating to the Study
7 Commission on Lobbyist Ethics.

8 WHEREAS, The Maryland Public Ethics Law was enacted in 1979 to assure the
9 people of this State that the operations of government are free from improper
10 influence and the appearance of improper influence; and

11 WHEREAS, The Ethics Law regulates not only officials and public employees,
12 but also persons who lobby on behalf of private sector interests; and

13 WHEREAS, While officials and employees are subject to an extensive code of
14 ethical conduct under the Ethics Law, regulated lobbyists are generally subject only
15 to financial reporting requirements, administered by the State Ethics Commission;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Since the enactment of the Ethics Law 20 years ago, the business of
18 lobbying has grown enormously, with a substantial increase in the number of
19 regulated lobbyists, their compensation, and their impact on the legislative process
20 and the functioning of the Executive Branch; and

21 WHEREAS, Consideration should be given to moving the offices of the State
22 Ethics Commission, which regulates persons who lobby the Governor and General
23 Assembly, from Towson to Annapolis; and

1 WHEREAS, In 1998, the General Assembly created a special study commission
 2 to revise the law relating to legislative ethics, but did not authorize that commission
 3 to review the provisions of the Ethics Law relating to regulated lobbyists; and

4 WHEREAS, The people of Maryland have a right to be assured that the practice
 5 of lobbying is carried out in a way that enhances the public welfare and does not
 6 subject our government to improper influence or create the appearance of improper
 7 influence; now, therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That:

9 (a) There is a Study Commission on Lobbyist Ethics.

10 (b) The Study Commission shall consist of the following ~~11~~ 13 members:

11 ~~(1) Three individuals, at least one of whom shall be a member of the~~
 12 ~~Senate of Maryland and one of whom shall be a regulated lobbyist, appointed by the~~
 13 ~~President of the Senate;~~

14 ~~(2) Three individuals, at least one of whom shall be a member of the~~
 15 ~~House of Delegates and one of whom shall be a regulated lobbyist, appointed by the~~
 16 ~~Speaker of the House; and~~

17 ~~(3) Five individuals, at least one of whom shall be a member of the State~~
 18 ~~Ethics Commission and one of whom shall be a regulated lobbyist, appointed by the~~
 19 ~~Governor.~~

20 (1) Four individuals appointed by the President of the Senate, including:

21 (i) At least two members of the Senate of Maryland;

22 (ii) A least one regulated lobbyist; and

23 (iii) If necessary to fill the four appointments allowed to the
 24 President under this paragraph, one additional individual;

25 (2) Four individuals appointed by the Speaker of the House, including:

26 (i) At least two members of the House of Delegates;

27 (ii) At least one regulated lobbyist; and

28 (iii) If necessary to fill the four appointments allowed to the Speaker
 29 under this paragraph, one additional individual; and

30 (3) Five individuals appointed by the Governor, including:

31 (i) At least one member of the State Ethics Commission;

32 (ii) At least one regulated lobbyist;

1 (iii) At least one representative of Common Cause/Maryland; and

2 (iv) If necessary to fill the five appointments allowed to the
3 Governor under this paragraph, one or two additional individuals.

4 (c) The chairman of the Study Commission shall be designated jointly by the
5 President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House.

6 (d) The Department of Legislative Services and the State Ethics Commission
7 shall provide staff for the Study Commission.

8 (e) The Study Commission shall:

9 (1) Examine the Maryland Public Ethics Law as it relates to regulated
10 lobbyists;

11 (2) Collect information about lobbying practices and standards of ethics
12 for regulated lobbyists, including provisions of law relating to the regulation of
13 lobbyists enacted by other jurisdictions;

14 (3) Receive testimony, as the Commission considers appropriate;

15 (4) Formulate a Code of Ethics for Lobbyists;

16 (5) Consider whether the offices of the State Ethics Commission should
17 be moved to Annapolis;

18 (6) Propose any appropriate statutory changes to the Maryland Public
19 Ethics Law pertaining to regulated lobbyists; and

20 (7) Report its findings to the Governor and, subject to § 2-1246 of the
21 State Government Article, to the General Assembly not later than December 31, 1999.

22 (f) The Study Commission shall terminate its existence after December 31,
23 1999; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
25 Legislative Services to the Honorable Parris N. Glendening, Governor of Maryland;
26 the Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; and
27 the Honorable Casper R. Taylor, Jr., Speaker of the House of Delegates.