

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 3

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1999 Regular Session
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By: **Senator Collins**
Introduced and read first time: February 3, 1999
Assigned to: Economic and Environmental Affairs

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A Senate 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, lobbyists are generally subject only to financial
15 reporting requirements; and

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

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

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

27 **RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That:**

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

29 (b) The Commission shall consist of the following 11 members:

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

4 (2) Three individuals, at least one of whom shall be a member of
5 the House of Delegates and one of whom shall be a regulated lobbyist, appointed by
6 the Speaker of the House; and

7 (3) Five individuals, at least one of whom shall represent the State
8 Ethics Commission and one of whom shall be a regulated lobbyist, appointed by the
9 Governor.

10 (c) The chairman of the Commission shall be designated jointly by the
11 President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House.

12 (d) The Department of Legislative Services and the State Ethics
13 Commission shall provide staff for the Commission.

14 (e) The Commission shall:

15 (1) Examine the Maryland Public Ethics Law as it relates to
16 lobbyists;

17 (2) Collect information about lobbying practices and standards of
18 ethics for lobbyists, including provisions of law relating to the regulation of lobbyists
19 enacted by other jurisdictions;

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

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

22 (5) Propose any appropriate statutory changes to the Maryland
23 Public Ethics Law as it relates to lobbying; and

24 (6) Report its findings to the Governor and, subject to § 2-1246 of
25 the State Government Article, to the General Assembly not later than December 31,
26 1999.

27 (f) The Commission shall terminate its existence after December 31,
28 1999; and be it further

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