

# SENATE BILL 618

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6lr3209  
CF HB 636

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By: **Senators Watson and Salling**

Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

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Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: March 7, 2026

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## CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Ethics – Members of the General Assembly – State and Local Government**  
3 **Employment Exemption**

4 FOR the purpose of ~~exempting~~ authorizing the Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics to  
5 exempt a member of the General Assembly, a filed candidate for election to the  
6 General Assembly, or a member–elect of the General Assembly from the prohibition  
7 against receiving earned income from an executive unit or political subdivision of the  
8 State under certain circumstances; requiring the Committee to issue a certain  
9 opinion; and generally relating to earned income by members of the General  
10 Assembly, filed candidates for election to the General Assembly, and members–elect  
11 of the General Assembly.

12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
13 Article – General Provisions  
14 Section 5–514(a)  
15 Annotated Code of Maryland  
16 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

17 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
18 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

19 **Article – General Provisions**

20 5–514.

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 (a) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) or (3) of this subsection, a member  
 2 of the General Assembly, a filed candidate for election to the General Assembly, or a  
 3 member-elect of the General Assembly may not receive earned income from:

4 (i) an executive unit; or

5 (ii) a political subdivision of the State.

6 (2) The Joint Ethics Committee may exempt an individual from the  
 7 provisions of paragraph (1) of this subsection if:

8 **(I)** the earned income is for:

9 ~~(i)~~ **1.** educational instruction provided by the member,  
 10 candidate, or member-elect;

11 ~~(ii)~~ **2.** a position that is subject to a merit system hiring process;

12 ~~(iii)~~ **3.** a human services position; ~~or~~

13 ~~(iv)~~ **4.** a career promotion, change, or progression that is a logical  
 14 transition from a pre-existing relationship as described in paragraph (3)(ii) of this  
 15 subsection; **OR**

16 **5. IF THE INDIVIDUAL HAS SERVED AT LEAST ONE FULL**  
 17 **TERM IN THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OR ON THE GOVERNING BODY OF A**  
 18 **POLITICAL SUBDIVISION OF THE STATE, A POSITION FOR WHICH THE INDIVIDUAL**  
 19 **OBJECTIVELY SATISFIES THE MINIMUM EDUCATION, LICENSURE, AND EXPERIENCE**  
 20 **REQUIREMENTS; AND**

21 **(II) THE INDIVIDUAL COMPLIES WITH § 5-506 OF THIS**  
 22 **SUBTITLE.**

23 (3) This subsection does not apply to compensation to a member, candidate,  
 24 or member-elect derived from:

25 (i) employment as a nonelected law enforcement officer or a fire or  
 26 rescue squad worker; ~~for~~

27 (ii) a transaction or relationship that existed before the individual:

28 1. filed a certificate of candidacy for election to the General  
 29 Assembly while the individual was not an incumbent member of the General Assembly; or

30 2. was appointed to fill a vacancy; ~~OR~~

~~(H) A TRANSACTION OR RELATIONSHIP:~~

~~1. THAT THE INDIVIDUAL ENTERED INTO AFTER HAVING SERVED AT LEAST ONE FULL ELECTED TERM IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY; AND~~

~~2. FOR WHICH THE INDIVIDUAL HAS OBJECTIVELY SATISFIED THE MINIMUM EDUCATION, LICENSURE, AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS.~~

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics shall issue an opinion to provide guidance to the members of the Maryland General Assembly on compliance with this Act, including:

(1) necessary actions that a member should take to avoid a conflict of interest; and

(2) factors that the Committee will consider when determining whether to grant an exemption under § 5-514(a)(2) of the General Provisions Article, as enacted by Section 1 of this Act.

SECTION ~~2.~~ 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect ~~October 1, 2026~~ January 13, 2027.

Approved:

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Governor.

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President of the Senate.

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Speaker of the House of Delegates.