

SENATE BILL 618

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CF HB 636

By: **Senators Watson and Salling**

Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

A BILL ENTITLED

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 a member of the General Assembly, a filed candidate for
5 election to the General Assembly, or a member–elect of the General Assembly from
6 the prohibition against receiving earned income from an executive unit or political
7 subdivision of the State under certain circumstances; and generally relating to
8 earned income by members of the General Assembly, filed candidates for election to
9 the General Assembly, and members–elect of the General Assembly.

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

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

17 **Article – General Provisions**

18 5–514.

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

22 (i) an executive unit; or

23 (ii) a political subdivision of the State.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(2) The Joint Ethics Committee may exempt an individual from the provisions of paragraph (1) of this subsection if the earned income is for:

(i) educational instruction provided by the member, candidate, or member-elect;

(ii) a position that is subject to a merit system hiring process;

(iii) a human services position; or

(iv) a career promotion, change, or progression that is a logical transition from a pre-existing relationship as described in paragraph (3)(ii) of this subsection.

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

(i) employment as a nonelected law enforcement officer or a fire or rescue squad worker; [or]

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

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

2. was appointed to fill a vacancy; OR

(III) 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 this Act shall take effect October 1, 2026.