
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ETHICS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that maintaining the
2 public's trust in government officials is vital to the strength
3 of our democracy. As article XIV of the state constitution
4 proclaims, "The people of Hawaii believe that public officers
5 and employees must exhibit the highest standards of ethical
6 conduct and that these standards come from the personal
7 integrity of each individual in government." While some of our
8 sister states have been rocked by corruption scandals in recent
9 years – caused by poor ethics laws, inadequate enforcement of
10 those laws, or both – Hawaii takes pride in its strong ethics
11 laws, and the commitment of more than 50,000 state employees who
12 demonstrate the ideals of public service every day.

13 The legislature recognizes the importance of ethics
14 education and advice in preventing ethics violations. This Act
15 clarifies existing statutes to enable the ethics commission and
16 its staff to better educate and advise state employees,



1 legislators, lobbyists, and the public. This Act is based on
2 the following findings:

3 (1) A recent statutory change designed to clarify the
4 application of the ethics code to task force members
5 had the unintended effect of changing the law with
6 respect to legislators as well. This Act restores
7 earlier language that protects legislators when
8 carrying out a "legislative function";

9 (2) Hawaii's lobbyist law, chapter 97, Hawaii Revised
10 Statutes, is both under- and over-inclusive. Amending
11 the definitions of "lobbying" and "lobbyist" will
12 provide additional transparency to the public while
13 relieving some individuals (specifically, certain
14 representatives of charitable, nonprofit
15 organizations) from having to register as lobbyists.
16 Similarly, several provisions of the lobbyists law can
17 be streamlined to avoid unnecessary paperwork and to
18 remove obsolete provisions that pertain to criminal
19 penalties that no longer exist;



1 (3) Various fines for violations have not been increased
2 since they were first authorized. The following are
3 examples:

4 (A) The current maximum penalty that the ethics
5 commission can impose for a violation of the
6 ethics code is \$500 per violation. This penalty
7 amount has not been adjusted since being set by
8 the legislature in 1992. Adjusted for inflation,
9 an equivalent penalty would be approximately \$857
10 in 2016 dollars. The legislature believes that
11 the current statutory penalty should be increased
12 to \$1,000;

13 (B) The maximum penalty for violating chapter 97,
14 Hawaii Revised Statutes, regulating lobbyists has
15 remained at \$500 since 1995. This Act increases
16 the fine to \$1,000 to account for inflation;

17 (C) The fine for legislators, employees, and board or
18 commission members for failing to file a
19 financial disclosure report on time was set in
20 1995 at \$50. An equivalent fine would be
21 approximately \$80 in 2016 dollars. This Act



1 increases the fine to \$75 to account for
2 inflation; and

3 (D) The fine for candidates for state elective office
4 for failing to timely file a financial disclosure
5 report was set in 1995 at \$25. An equivalent
6 fine would be approximately \$40 in 2016 dollars.

7 This Act increases the fine to \$50 to account for
8 inflation; and

9 (4) The expense of sending letters by registered mail,
10 return receipt requested, to those who fail to file
11 their financial disclosures on time is no longer
12 justified. In 2016, the ethics commission sent nearly
13 one hundred letters, each letter costing \$14.87 in
14 postage. The commissions spent over \$1,000 in postage
15 for a communication that could have been sent to
16 users' state email accounts or by first-class mail.

17 The purpose of this Act is to provide additional clarity
18 and consistency in the administration and enforcement of
19 Hawaii's ethics laws, and to promote integrity in state
20 government, by:



- 1 (1) Clarifying the procedures used by the state ethics
2 commission and its staff for providing advice on
3 ethics issues; educating employees, legislators,
4 lobbyists, and the general public; collecting and
5 publishing information from public employees,
6 candidates, and lobbyists; and resolving
7 investigations;
- 8 (2) Restoring previous statutory language protecting
9 legislators when carrying out a "legislative
10 function";
- 11 (3) Clarifying the fair treatment and conflict of interest
12 law with respect to task force members and legislators
13 by restoring previous statutory language regarding a
14 legislator's "legislative function" and requiring the
15 ethics commission to adopt rules regarding disclosures
16 for task force members;
- 17 (4) Increasing the maximum penalties that the commission
18 may impose and increasing the threshold for filing
19 lobbying expenditure reports and registering as a
20 lobbyist to account for inflation;



- 1 (5) Allowing the commission to notify individuals who fail
2 to file their financial disclosures by the statutory
3 deadline by email or first-class mail, or both, rather
4 than by registered mail, return receipt requested;
- 5 (6) Removing the mens rea requirement to prove a violation
6 of chapter 97, Hawaii Revised Statutes, recognizing
7 that the failure to file a report required by chapter
8 97, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is no longer a criminal
9 offense;
- 10 (7) Clarifying the definition of "lobbying" to promote
11 transparency in the legislative process;
- 12 (8) Amending the definition of "expenditure" and
13 "lobbyist";
- 14 (9) Granting the employer of a lobbyist the ability to
15 terminate a registered lobbyist, in the event that a
16 lobbyist does not terminate oneself; and
- 17 (10) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the
18 purposes of clarity and consistency.

19 SECTION 2. Section 28-8.3, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
20 amended as follows:

- 21 1. By amending subsection (a) to read:



1 "(a) No department of the State other than the attorney
2 general may employ or retain any attorney, by contract or
3 otherwise, for the purpose of representing the State or the
4 department in any litigation, rendering legal counsel to the
5 department, or drafting legal documents for the department;
6 provided that the foregoing provision shall not apply to the
7 employment or retention of attorneys:

- 8 (1) By the public utilities commission, the labor and
9 industrial relations appeals board, and the Hawaii
10 labor relations board;
- 11 (2) By any court or judicial or legislative office of the
12 State; provided that if the attorney general is
13 requested to provide representation to a court or
14 judicial office by the chief justice or the chief
15 justice's designee, or to a legislative office by the
16 speaker of the house of representatives and the
17 president of the senate jointly, and the attorney
18 general declines to provide [~~such~~] the representation
19 on the grounds of conflict of interest, the attorney
20 general shall retain an attorney for the court,



- 1 judicial, or legislative office, subject to approval
- 2 by the court, judicial, or legislative office;
- 3 (3) By the legislative reference bureau;
- 4 (4) By any compilation commission that may be constituted
- 5 from time to time;
- 6 (5) By the real estate commission for any action involving
- 7 the real estate recovery fund;
- 8 (6) By the contractors license board for any action
- 9 involving the contractors recovery fund;
- 10 (7) By the office of Hawaiian affairs;
- 11 (8) By the department of commerce and consumer affairs for
- 12 the enforcement of violations of chapters 480 and
- 13 485A;
- 14 (9) As grand jury counsel;
- 15 (10) By the Hawaii health systems corporation, or its
- 16 regional system boards, or any of their facilities;
- 17 (11) By the auditor;
- 18 (12) By the office of ombudsman;
- 19 (13) By the insurance division;
- 20 (14) By the University of Hawaii;
- 21 (15) By the Kahoolawe island reserve commission;



- 1 (16) By the division of consumer advocacy;
- 2 (17) By the office of elections;
- 3 (18) By the campaign spending commission;
- 4 (19) By the Hawaii tourism authority, as provided in
- 5 section 201B-2.5;
- 6 (20) By the division of financial institutions for any
- 7 action involving the mortgage loan recovery fund;
- 8 (21) By the office of information practices; [~~or~~]
- 9 (22) By the state ethics commission; or
- 10 (23) By a department, if the attorney general, for reasons
- 11 deemed by the attorney general to be good and
- 12 sufficient, declines to employ or retain an attorney
- 13 for a department; provided that the governor waives
- 14 the provision of this section."

15 2. By amending subsection (c) to read:

16 "(c) Every attorney employed by any department on a full-

17 time basis, except an attorney employed by the public utilities

18 commission, the labor and industrial relations appeals board,

19 the Hawaii labor relations board, the office of Hawaiian

20 affairs, the Hawaii health systems corporation or its regional

21 system boards, the department of commerce and consumer affairs



1 in prosecution of consumer complaints, insurance division, the
 2 division of consumer advocacy, the University of Hawaii, the
 3 Hawaii tourism authority as provided in section 201B-2.5, the
 4 office of information practices, the state ethics commission, or
 5 as grand jury counsel, shall be a deputy attorney general."

6 SECTION 3. Section 84-13, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
 7 amended to read as follows:

8 "§84-13 Fair treatment. (a) No legislator or employee
 9 shall use or attempt to use the legislator's or employee's
 10 official position to secure or grant unwarranted privileges,
 11 exemptions, advantages, contracts, or treatment, for oneself or
 12 others; including but not limited to the following:

13 (1) Seeking other employment or contract for services for
 14 oneself by the use or attempted use of the
 15 legislator's or employee's office or position[-];

16 (2) Accepting, receiving, or soliciting compensation or
 17 other consideration for the performance of the
 18 legislator's or employee's official duties or
 19 responsibilities except as provided by law[-];

20 (3) Using state time, equipment or other facilities for
 21 private business purposes [-]; or



1 (4) Soliciting, selling, or otherwise engaging in a
 2 substantial financial transaction with a subordinate
 3 or a person or business whom the legislator or
 4 employee inspects or supervises in the legislator's or
 5 employee's official capacity.

6 **(b)** Nothing [herein] in this section shall be construed to
 7 prohibit a legislator from introducing bills and resolutions,
 8 ~~[or to prevent a person from serving on a task force or]~~ from
 9 serving on ~~[a task force committee,]~~ committees, or from making
 10 statements or taking ~~[official]~~ action ~~[as a legislator, or a~~
 11 ~~task force member or a task force member's designee or~~
 12 ~~representative.]~~ in the exercise of the legislator's legislative
 13 functions. Every legislator~~[, or task force member or designee~~
 14 ~~or representative of a task force member]~~ shall ~~[file a full and~~
 15 ~~complete public disclosure of]~~ publicly disclose the nature and
 16 extent of the interest or transaction ~~[which]~~ that the
 17 legislator ~~[or task force member or task force member's designee~~
 18 ~~or representative]~~ believes may be affected by ~~[the legislator's~~
 19 ~~or task force member's official action.]~~ legislative action.
 20 The state ethics commission shall establish rules to provide for
 21 this public disclosure.



1 (c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent
2 a person from serving on a task force or a task force committee,
3 or from making statements or taking official action as a task
4 force member or a task force member's designee or
5 representative. Every task force member or task force member's
6 designee or representative shall publicly disclose the nature
7 and extent of any interest or transaction which the task force
8 member or task force member's designee or representative
9 believes may be affected by the task force member's official
10 action. The state ethics commission shall establish rules to
11 provide for this public disclosure."

12 SECTION 4. Section 84-14, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
13 amended by amending subsection (f) to read as follows:

14 "(f) ~~[Subsections (a), (b), and (d) shall not apply to a~~
15 ~~task force member or the designee or representative of that task~~
16 ~~force member whose service as a task force member would not~~
17 ~~otherwise cause that member, designee, or representative to be~~
18 ~~considered an employee, if the task force member or the designee~~
19 ~~or representative of that task force member complies with the~~
20 ~~disclosure requirements under section 84-17.] Nothing in this~~
21 section shall be construed to prevent a person from serving on a



1 task force or a task force committee, or from making statements
 2 or taking official action as a task force member or a task force
 3 member's designee or representative. Every task force member or
 4 task force member's designee or representative shall publicly
 5 disclose the nature and extent of any interest or transaction
 6 that the task force member or task force member's designee or
 7 representative believes may be affected by the task force
 8 member's official action. The state ethics commission shall
 9 establish rules to provide for this public disclosure."

10 SECTION 5. Section 84-17, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
 11 amended by amending subsections (i) and (j) to read as follows:

12 "(i) Failure of a legislator, a delegate to the
 13 constitutional convention, or employee to file a disclosure of
 14 financial interests as required by this section shall be a
 15 violation of this chapter. Any legislator, delegate to a
 16 constitutional convention, or employee who fails to file a
 17 disclosure of financial interests when due shall be assessed an
 18 administrative fine of [~~\$50-~~] \$75. The ethics commission, upon
 19 the expiration of the time allowed for filing, shall release to
 20 the public a list of all persons who have failed to file
 21 financial disclosure statements. The [state] ethics commission



1 shall notify a person, by [~~registered mail, return receipt~~
2 ~~requested,~~] electronic mail to the person's state email address
3 or by first-class mail, of the failure to file, and the
4 disclosure of financial interests shall be submitted to the
5 commission not later than 4:30 p.m. on the tenth day after
6 notification of the failure to file has been mailed to the
7 person. If a disclosure of financial interests has not been
8 filed within ten days of the due date, an additional
9 administrative fine of \$10 for each day a disclosure remains
10 unfiled shall be added to the administrative fine. All
11 administrative fines collected under this section shall be
12 deposited in the State's general fund. Any administrative fine
13 for late filing shall be in addition to any other action the
14 commission may take under this chapter for violations of the
15 state ethics code. The commission may waive any administrative
16 fines assessed under this subsection for good cause shown.

17 (j) The chief election officer, upon receipt of the
18 nomination paper of any person seeking a state elective office,
19 including the office of delegate to the constitutional
20 convention, shall notify the ethics commission of the name of
21 the candidate for state office and the date on which the person



1 filed the nomination paper. The ethics commission, upon the
2 expiration of the time allowed for filing, shall release to the
3 public a list of all candidates who have failed to file
4 financial disclosure statements and shall immediately assess a
5 late filing penalty fee against those candidates of [~~\$25~~] \$50,
6 which shall be collected by the [~~state~~] ethics commission and
7 deposited into the general fund. The ethics commission may
8 investigate, initiate, or receive charges as to whether a
9 candidate's financial disclosure statement discloses the
10 financial interests required to be disclosed. After proceeding
11 in conformance with section 84-31, the ethics commission may
12 issue a decision as to whether a candidate has complied with
13 section 84-17(f) and this decision shall be a matter of public
14 record."

15 SECTION 6. Section 84-31, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
16 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

17 "(a) The ethics commission shall have the following powers
18 and duties:

19 (1) It shall prescribe forms for the disclosures required
20 by article XIV of the Hawaii constitution and section
21 84-17 and the gifts disclosure statements required by



1 section 84-11.5 and shall establish orderly procedures
 2 for implementing the requirements of those provisions;
 3 (2) It shall render advisory opinions upon the request of
 4 any legislator, employee, or delegate to the
 5 constitutional convention, or person formerly holding
 6 [~~such~~] the office or employment as to whether the
 7 facts and circumstances of a particular case
 8 constitute or will constitute a violation of the code
 9 of ethics[~~-~~], section 11-8, or section 11-316. If no
 10 advisory opinion is rendered within [~~thirty~~] ____ days
 11 after the request is filed with the commission, it
 12 shall be deemed that an advisory opinion was rendered
 13 and that the facts and circumstances of that
 14 particular case do not constitute a violation of the
 15 code of ethics. The opinion rendered or deemed
 16 rendered, until amended or revoked, shall be binding
 17 on the commission in any subsequent charges concerning
 18 the legislator, employee, or delegate to the
 19 constitutional convention, or person formerly holding
 20 [~~such~~] the office or employment, who sought the
 21 opinion and acted in reliance on it in good faith,



1 unless material facts were omitted or misstated by
 2 [~~such~~] the persons in the request for an advisory
 3 opinion;

4 (3) It shall initiate, receive, and consider charges
 5 concerning alleged violation of this chapter, initiate
 6 or make investigation, and hold hearings [~~+~~]. The
 7 commission and the subject of any charge may agree to
 8 resolve any alleged violation of this chapter at any
 9 time. The resolution shall be in writing and shall be
 10 signed by three or more members of the commission and
 11 by the subject of any charge. The resolution shall
 12 have the force and effect of a final decision and
 13 order issued after a contested case hearing and shall
 14 not be appealable;

15 (4) It may subpoena witnesses, administer oaths, and take
 16 testimony relating to matters before the commission
 17 and require the production for examination of any
 18 books or papers relative to any matter under
 19 investigation or in question before the commission.
 20 Before the commission shall exercise any of the powers
 21 authorized in this section with respect to any



1 investigation or hearings, it shall by formal
2 resolution[7] supported by a vote of three or more
3 members of the commission, define the nature and scope
4 of its inquiry;

5 (5) It may, from time to time, adopt, amend, and repeal
6 any rules, not inconsistent with this chapter, that in
7 the judgment of the commission seem appropriate [~~for~~
8 ~~the carrying out of~~] to implement this chapter and for
9 the efficient administration thereof, including every
10 matter or thing required to be done or which may be
11 done with the approval or consent or by order or under
12 the direction or supervision of or as prescribed by
13 the commission. The rules, when adopted as provided
14 in chapter 91, shall have the force and effect of law;

15 (6) It shall have jurisdiction for purposes of
16 investigation and taking appropriate action on alleged
17 violations of this chapter in all proceedings
18 commenced within six years of an alleged violation of
19 this chapter by a legislator or employee or former
20 legislator or employee. A proceeding shall be deemed
21 commenced by the filing of a charge with the



1 commission or by the signing of a charge by three or
2 more members of the commission. Nothing [~~herein~~] in
3 this paragraph shall bar proceedings against a person
4 who by fraud or other device, prevents discovery of a
5 violation of this chapter;

6 (7) It shall distribute its publications without cost to
7 the public and shall initiate and maintain programs
8 with the purpose of educating the citizenry and all
9 legislators, delegates to the constitutional
10 convention, and employees on matters of ethics in
11 government employment [~~and~~]. It may issue guidance
12 regarding the application of this chapter, provided
13 that the guidance shall not have the force and effect
14 of law;

15 (8) It shall administer any code of ethics adopted by a
16 state constitutional convention, subject to the
17 procedural requirements of this part and any rules
18 adopted thereunder[-]; and

19 (9) It may authorize its staff to provide confidential
20 guidance to any individual as to whether the facts and
21 circumstances of a particular case constitute or would



1 constitute a violation under this chapter, section 11-
2 8, or section 11-316; provided that nothing in this
3 paragraph shall establish an attorney-client
4 relationship between the person seeking advice and the
5 commission or its staff. Any written guidance
6 rendered by commission staff advising that proposed
7 conduct is allowable, until amended or revoked, shall
8 be binding upon the commission in any subsequent
9 charges concerning the individual who sought the
10 guidance and acted in reliance on it in good faith,
11 unless material facts were omitted or misstated by the
12 persons in the request for guidance.

13 Nothing in this subsection shall prevent the commission or its
14 staff from investigating charges concerning alleged violations
15 of this chapter."

16 SECTION 7. Section 84-39, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
17 amended to read as follows:

18 " ~~[†]~~ §84-39 ~~[†]~~ **Administrative fines.** (a) Where an
19 administrative fine has not been established for a violation of
20 a provision of this chapter, any person, including a legislator
21 or employee, who violates a provision of this chapter shall be



1 subject to an administrative fine imposed by the ethics
2 commission that shall not exceed [~~\$500~~] \$1,000 for each
3 violation. All fines collected under this section shall be
4 deposited in the general fund.

5 (b) No fine shall be assessed under this section unless:

6 (1) The commission convenes a hearing in accordance with
7 section 84-31(c) and chapter 91[+] and

8 [~~+2~~] A] a decision has been rendered by the commission[+];
9 or

10 (2) The commission and respondent agree to resolve a
11 charge alleging violation of this chapter prior to
12 completion of the contested case process and the
13 resolution includes payment of an administrative fine
14 or restitution, or both."

15 SECTION 8. Section 97-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
16 amended to read as follows:

17 "§97-1 Definitions. When used in this chapter:

18 [~~+1~~] "Administrative action" means the proposal, drafting,
19 consideration, amendment, enactment, or defeat by any
20 administrative agency of any rule, regulation, or
21 other action governed by section 91-3.



1 ~~[(2)]~~ "Administrative agency" means a commission, board,
2 agency, or other body, or official in the state
3 government that is not a part of the legislative or
4 judicial branch.

5 ~~[(3)]~~ "Contribution" includes a gift, subscription,
6 forgiveness of a loan, advance, or deposit of money,
7 or anything of value and includes a contract, promise,
8 or agreement, whether or not enforceable, to make a
9 contribution.

10 ~~[(4)]~~ "Expenditure" includes a payment, distribution,
11 forgiveness of a loan, advance, deposit, or gift of
12 money, or anything of value and includes a contract,
13 promise, or agreement, whether or not enforceable, to
14 make an expenditure. "Expenditure" also includes
15 compensation or other consideration paid to a lobbyist
16 for the performance of lobbying services.

17 ~~["Expenditure" excludes the expenses of preparing~~
18 ~~written testimony and exhibits for a hearing before~~
19 ~~the legislature or an administrative agency.~~

20 ~~(5)]~~ "Legislative action" means the sponsorship, drafting,
21 introduction, consideration, modification, enactment,



1 or defeat of any bill, resolution, amendment, report,
2 nomination, appointment, or any other matter pending
3 or proposed in the legislature.

4 "Lobbying" means communicating directly or through an
5 agent, or soliciting others to communicate, with any
6 official in the legislative or executive branch, for
7 the purpose of attempting to influence legislative or
8 administrative action or a ballot issue. "Lobbying"
9 shall not include the preparation and submission of a
10 grant application pursuant to chapter 42F by a
11 representative of a nonprofit organization, but shall
12 include any communication with any official in the
13 legislative or executive branch for the purpose of
14 attempting to influence action on any existing or
15 future grant application.

16 [~~6~~] "Lobbyist" means any individual who [~~fe~~]:

- 17 (1) Receives or expects to receive, either by employment
18 or contract, more than \$1,000 in monetary or in-kind
19 compensation in any calendar year for engaging in
20 lobbying, either personally or through the person's
21 agents; or



- 1 (2) For pay or other consideration [engages]:
- 2 (A) Engages in lobbying in excess of five hours in
- 3 any month of any reporting period described in
- 4 section 97-3 [~~or spends~~];
- 5 (B) Engages in lobbying in excess of ten hours during
- 6 any calendar year;
- 7 (C) Engages in lobbying on three or more bills,
- 8 resolutions, or both, during any legislative
- 9 session; or
- 10 (D) Spends more than [~~\$750~~] \$1,000 of the person's or
- 11 any other person's money lobbying during any
- 12 reporting period described in section 97-3.
- 13 [~~(7)~~] ~~"Lobbying" means communicating directly or through an~~
- 14 ~~agent, or soliciting others to communicate, with any~~
- 15 ~~official in the legislative or executive branch, for~~
- 16 ~~the purpose of attempting to influence legislative or~~
- 17 ~~administrative action or a ballot issue.~~
- 18 ~~(8)]~~ "Person" means a corporation, individual, union,
- 19 association, firm, sole proprietorship, partnership,
- 20 committee, club, or any other organization or a



1 representative of a group of persons acting in
2 concert."

3 SECTION 9. Section 97-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
4 amended by amending subsection (d) to read as follows:

5 "(d) A lobbyist shall file a notice of termination within
6 ten days after the lobbyist ceases the activity which required
7 the lobbyist's registration[-]; provided that if the lobbyist
8 fails to file a notice of termination, the person who employed
9 or contracted for the services of the lobbyist may file the
10 notice of termination. The lobbyist and the [~~employer~~] person
11 who employed or contracted for the services of the lobbyist
12 shall remain subject, however, to the requirements of chapter 97
13 for the period during which the registration was effective."

14 SECTION 10. Section 97-3, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended by amending subsections (a), (b), and (c) to read as
16 follows:

17 "(a) The following persons shall file a statement of
18 expenditures with the state ethics commission on March 31,
19 May 31, and January 31 of each year and within thirty days after
20 adjournment sine die of any special session of the legislature:

21 (1) Each lobbyist;



- 1 (2) Each person who spends [~~\$750~~] \$1,000 or more of the
2 person's or any other person's money in any [~~six-month~~
3 ~~period~~] reporting period described in this section for
4 the purpose of attempting to influence legislative or
5 administrative action or a ballot issue by
6 communicating or urging others to communicate with
7 public officials; provided that any amounts expended
8 for travel costs, including incidental meals and
9 lodging, shall not be included in the tallying of the
10 [~~\$750;~~] \$1,000 and need not be reported; and provided
11 further that any amounts expended by a nonprofit
12 organization to prepare and submit a grant application
13 pursuant to chapter 42F shall likewise not be included
14 in the tallying of the \$1,000 and need not be
15 reported; and
- 16 (3) Each person who employs or contracts for the services
17 of one or more lobbyists, whether independently or
18 jointly with other persons. If the person is an
19 industry, trade, or professional association, only the
20 association is the employer of the lobbyist.



1 (b) The March 31 report shall cover the period from
2 January 1 through the last day of February. The May 31 report
3 shall cover the period from March 1 through April 30. The
4 January 31 report shall cover the period from May 1 through
5 December 31 of the previous year. The report to be filed within
6 thirty days after adjournment sine die of a special session of
7 the legislature shall [~~cover~~]:

8 (1) Cover the period from May 1 through adjournment sine
9 die of that special session [~~and shall apply~~];

10 (2) Be filed only by persons listed in subsection (a) who
11 engage in lobbying activities, or who make
12 expenditures, for the purpose of attempting to
13 influence legislative action considered during a
14 special session; and

15 (3) Apply to and include only those expenditures and
16 contributions that relate to legislative action
17 considered during that special session[~~-~~];

18 provided that those expenditures and contributions included in
19 the report need not be included by the person filing the report
20 in any subsequent statement of expenditures.

21 (c) The statement shall contain the following information:



- 1 (1) The name and address of each person with respect to
2 whom expenditures for the purpose of lobbying in the
3 total sum of \$25 or more per day was made by the
4 person filing the statement during the statement
5 period and the amount or value of [~~such~~] the
6 expenditure;
- 7 (2) The name and address of each person with respect to
8 whom expenditures for the purpose of lobbying in the
9 aggregate of \$150 or more was made by the person
10 filing the statement during the statement period and
11 the amount or value of [~~such~~] the expenditures;
- 12 (3) The total sum or value of all expenditures for the
13 purpose of lobbying made by the person filing the
14 statement during the statement period [~~in excess of~~
15 ~~\$750 during the statement period~~]; provided that the
16 sum or value of each expenditure is itemized in the
17 following categories, as applicable:
- 18 (A) Preparation and distribution of lobbying
19 materials;
- 20 (B) Media advertising;
- 21 (C) Compensation paid to lobbyists;



- 1 (D) Fees paid [~~to consultants or~~] for consultant
- 2 services;
- 3 (E) Entertainment and events;
- 4 (F) Receptions, meals, food, and beverages;
- 5 (G) Gifts;
- 6 (H) Loans; [~~and~~]
- 7 (I) Interstate transportation, including incidental
- 8 meals and lodging; and
- 9 [~~(I)~~] (J) Other disbursements;

10 (4) The name and address of each person making
 11 contributions to the person filing the statement for
 12 the purpose of lobbying in the total sum of \$25 or
 13 more during the statement period and the amount or
 14 value of [~~such~~] the contributions; and

15 (5) The subject area of the legislative and administrative
 16 action which was supported or opposed by the person
 17 filing the statement during the statement period."

18 SECTION 11. Section 97-4.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
 19 amended to read as follows:

20 "[~~f~~] §97-4.5 [~~l~~] Lobbyist [~~list.~~] registration statements.

21 [~~As soon as is feasible after the commencement of each regular~~]



1 ~~session of the legislature, the state ethics commission shall~~
2 ~~publish a list of registered lobbyists, the names of the persons~~
3 ~~whom they represent, and other pertinent information but shall~~
4 ~~not include in such list the addresses of the lobbyists. The~~
5 ~~list shall be supplemented from time to time as may be~~
6 ~~necessary.] All lobbyist registration statements shall be posted~~
7 ~~on the ethics commission's website within a reasonable time~~
8 ~~after filing, and may be removed from the website after four~~
9 ~~years."~~

10 SECTION 12. Section 97-6, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
11 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

12 "(a) The state ethics commission shall administer and
13 implement this chapter, and shall have the following powers and
14 duties:

15 (1) Initiate, receive, and consider charges concerning
16 alleged violations of this chapter, and investigate or
17 cause to be investigated on a confidential basis, the
18 activities of any person to determine whether the
19 person is in compliance with this chapter[+]. The
20 commission and the subject of any charge may agree to
21 resolve any alleged violation of this chapter at any



1 time. The resolution shall be in writing and shall be
2 signed by three or more members of the commission and
3 by the subject of any charge. The resolution shall
4 have the force and effect of a final decision and
5 order issued after a contested case hearing and shall
6 not be appealable;

- 7 (2) Prescribe forms for the statements and reports
8 required by sections 97-2 and 97-3 and establish
9 orderly procedures for implementing the requirements
10 of those provisions;
- 11 (3) Render advisory opinions upon the request of any
12 person subject to this chapter. If no advisory
13 opinion is rendered within [~~thirty~~] ____ days after
14 the request is filed with the commission, it shall be
15 deemed that an advisory opinion was rendered and that
16 the facts and circumstances of that particular case do
17 not constitute a violation of this chapter. The
18 opinion rendered or deemed rendered, until amended or
19 revoked, shall be binding on the commission in any
20 subsequent charges concerning the person subject to
21 this chapter who sought the opinion and acted in



1 reliance on it in good faith, unless material facts
2 were omitted or misstated by the person in the request
3 for an advisory opinion;

4 (4) Issue subpoenas, administer oaths, and exercise those
5 powers conferred upon the commission by section 92-16;

6 (5) Adopt rules, not inconsistent with this chapter, as in
7 the judgment of the commission seem appropriate for
8 the carrying out of this chapter and for the efficient
9 administration of this chapter, including every matter
10 or thing required to be done or which may be done with
11 the approval or consent or by order or under the
12 direction or supervision of, or as prescribed by, the
13 commission. The rules, when adopted as provided in
14 chapter 91, shall have the force and effect of law;

15 [and]

16 (6) Have jurisdiction for purposes of investigation and
17 taking appropriate action on alleged violations of
18 this chapter in all proceedings commenced within three
19 years of an alleged violation of this chapter. A
20 proceeding shall be deemed commenced by the filing of
21 a charge with the commission or by the signing of a



1 charge by three or more members of the commission.
2 Nothing shall bar proceedings against a person who by
3 fraud or other device prevents discovery of a
4 violation of this chapter[-];

5 (7) Issue guidance regarding the application of this
6 chapter, provided that the guidance shall not have the
7 force and effect of law; and

8 (8) Authorize its staff to provide confidential guidance
9 to any individual as to whether the facts and
10 circumstances of a particular case constitute or will
11 constitute a violation under this chapter; provided
12 that nothing in this paragraph shall establish an
13 attorney-client relationship between the person
14 seeking advice and the commission or its staff. Any
15 written guidance rendered by commission staff advising
16 that proposed conduct is allowable, until amended or
17 revoked, shall be binding upon the commission in any
18 subsequent charges concerning the individual who
19 sought the guidance and acted in reliance on it in
20 good faith, unless material facts were omitted or
21 misstated by the persons in the request for guidance.



1 Nothing in this subsection shall prevent the commission or its
2 staff from investigating charges concerning alleged violations
3 of this chapter."

4 SECTION 13. Section 97-7, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
5 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

6 "(a) Any person who:

7 (1) [~~Wilfully fails~~] Fails to file any statement or report
8 required by this chapter;

9 (2) [~~Wilfully files~~] Files a statement or report
10 containing false information or material omission of
11 any fact;

12 (3) Engages in activities prohibited by section 97-5; or

13 (4) Fails to provide information required by section 97-2
14 or 97-3;

15 shall be subject to an administrative fine imposed by the
16 commission that shall not exceed [~~\$500~~] \$1,000 for each
17 violation of this chapter. All fines collected under this
18 section shall be deposited into the general fund."

19 SECTION 14. The state ethics commission, in its
20 discretion, may make any changes that it deems necessary to



1 internal procedures or forms to aid in the implementation of
2 this Act.

3 SECTION 15. If any provision of this Act, or the
4 application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held
5 invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or
6 applications of the Act that can be given effect without the
7 invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions
8 of this Act are severable.

9 SECTION 16. This Act does not affect rights and duties
10 that matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that
11 were begun before its effective date.

12 SECTION 17. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
13 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

14 SECTION 18. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



Report Title:

State Ethics Commission Package; Government; Ethics; Lobbyists

Description:

Clarifies the powers and duties of the State Ethics Commission; increases fines for ethics violations. Restores protection for legislators when carrying out a legislative function. Clarifies what is an expenditure for lobbyists and what is considered lobbying. Amends requirements for filing statements of expenditures. (HB290 HD1)

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

