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Research Brief

TO: Senator Bill Wielechowski
FROM: Roger Withington, Legislative Analyst
DATE: June 29, 2015
RE: Conflict of Interest Voting
LRS Report 15.422

You asked how other state legislatures address the issue of members voting on measures when they may have a conflict of interest. You were also wondering whether there is a model policy on this issue.

State ethics laws—which are addressed in statutes, in rules agreed upon by a legislative body, or in combinations of the two—vary in terms of how they define a conflict of interest and what legislators with conflicts are required to do. This variation is perhaps understandable, as ethics laws attempt to legislate a number of important—and, to some degree, mutually exclusive—values. These values include, among others, preventing legislators from using their public position for personal gain; preserving public faith in the legislature; preserving the representation of each constituency; and utilizing the expertise of sitting legislators. Laws sometimes emphasize one of these values over another, but almost every state appears to have some type of ethics law governing legislative conflicts of interest.

Although Alaska Statute 24.60.030(g) prohibits legislators from voting on matters that pose a personal conflict of interest, in practice, legislators almost always still vote because the statute defers to the Uniform Rules. The law includes the following provision:

(g) Unless required by the Uniform Rules of the Alaska State Legislature, a legislator may not vote on a question if the legislator has an equity or ownership interest in a business, investment, real property, lease, or other enterprise if the interest is substantial and the effect on that interest of the action to be voted on is greater than the effect on a substantial class of persons to which the legislator belongs as a member of a profession, occupation, industry, or region.

Pursuant to Uniform Rule 34, every member who is present must vote unless he or she receives the unanimous permission of the body to abstain for “special reasons.”¹ It appears, however, that historically, legislators rarely, if ever, receive unanimous permission to abstain from voting. Alaska legislators use a number of methods to address this issue: legislators sometimes do not request to be excused and simply state their conflicts before voting, members have been known to leave the chamber if they want to avoid voting (and the appearance of a conflict of interest), and legislators may request to be excused but face an objection and are, therefore, required to vote.²

In Alaska, vote requirements are generally based upon a majority of the respective body or, in a few cases, a majority of the number of members present. For example, Uniform Rule 39 (d), related to the third reading of a bill, states that no bill may become law without an affirmative vote of the majority of the membership of each house. This means that final passage of a bill requires 21 votes in the House and 11 votes in the Senate. Under these voting requirements, a legislator’s abstaining from voting would not reduce the total number of votes required to take an action. *Mason’s Manual of Legislative Procedure* offers the following description of this situation:

¹ The Alaska State Legislature’s *Uniform Rules* can be found at http://akleg.gov/docs/pdf/uniform_rules.pdf.

² Legislators may make an oral statement explaining why they are requesting to be excused from voting. The official Journals indicate only that a legislator moved to be excused, but not why. The oral statements are available on tapes of the legislature’s proceedings.

When a set number of votes or a majority or other proportion of the entire membership or of the members present is required, failure to vote does not reduce the vote required but reduces the pool of voters available to take the action and, therefore, has, in part, the same effect as a “no” vote. It would not seem to be correct to say that members not voting are presumed to be voting in the negative, although in this situation that is the effect of the failure to vote.³

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), all states address the potential of conflicts of interests for legislators. State conflict of interest definitions usually specify that a legislator may not have a personal or private interest, or gain in a financial way, by their votes or their legislative duties. States and chambers vary in terms of how they define a conflict of interest and what legislators with conflicts are required to do. The majority of legislative chambers (approximately 50 percent) require lawmakers to abstain from voting in certain conflict of interest situations; however, often it is up to the legislator to determine whether or not a conflict exists. A smaller number of chambers (approximately 17 percent) allow legislators to use their discretion to evaluate situations and decide whether to vote or to recuse themselves. Approximately 27 percent of chambers, including the Alaska House and Senate, do not allow lawmakers to recuse themselves, but do allow lawmakers to ask the body for permission to abstain from voting. We include NCSL’s summary table of each state’s voting recusal provisions as Attachment A and summary table of each state’s definition of conflict of interest as Attachment B.

Additionally, the majority of chambers require disclosure of conflicts of interest either before abstaining from voting, before voting, or shortly after voting. These disclosures are typically in addition to routine personal financial disclosure statements. Alaska does not require legislators to disclose potential conflicts before or shortly after voting on a particular bill. Although Alaska does not explicitly require this type of disclosure by law, a 2004 advisory opinion from the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics found that AS 24.60.030(g) requires a legislator to declare a substantial financial interest in a matter up for vote on the floor and to request to abstain from voting.⁴

Mark Quiner, Director of the NCSL’s Center for Ethics in Government, is unaware of any “model” legislation on conflict of interest laws, but, he notes, a couple of states refer to their ethics laws as being a “uniform” law, which usually denotes that the law has been adopted, more or less uniformly, by a number of states.^{5,6} Mr. Quiner notes that New Jersey has adopted a “Uniform Ethics Law,” although he is unsure of the source of the law, and Indiana has adopted what they refer to as a “Uniform Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement,” but again, he is not clear as to the source of their “uniform” law.⁷

Using NCSL’s Ethics and Lobbying Legislation Database, a searchable database that tracks ethics and lobbying legislation from the 2009 session to the present, ten states—Alaska, Florida, Maine, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Tennessee—have considered legislation that would amend their conflict of interest voting provisions. Twenty-six measures would prohibit a legislator from voting in certain circumstances, while two would add additional reporting requirements to the financial disclosure process.⁸ None of these appear to have become law.

We hope this is helpful. If you have questions or need additional information, please let us know.

³ Sec. 515 (b), Mason’s Manual of Legislative Procedure, National Conference of State Legislatures and American Society of Legislative Clerks and Secretaries, 2010, p. 351.

⁴ “Advisory Opinion 2004-02,” Alaska State Legislature Select Committee on Legislative Ethics, April 23, 2004, p. 3. We include this opinion as Attachment C. Included in Attachment C are Advisory Opinions 2008-01, 2011-05, and 2013-01, which pertain to conflicts of interest and employment of legislators that you may find helpful.

⁵ Mark Quiner, Director of the Center for Ethics in Government, National Conference of State Legislatures, can be contacted at 303-856-1485.

⁶ The Uniform Law Commission (<http://www.uniformlawcommission.com/Default.aspx>), “provides states with non-partisan, well-conceived and well-drafted legislation that brings clarity and stability to critical areas of state statutory law.”

⁷ New Jersey’s uniform law can be viewed at <http://nj.gov/ethics/docs/ethics/uniformcode.pdf>, and Indiana’s disclosure form can be viewed at <https://forms.in.gov/Download.aspx?id=8264>.

⁸ The NCSL’s Ethics and Lobbying Legislation Database can be found at <http://www.ncsl.org/research/ethics/ethics-and-lobbying-legislation-database-2009-to-p.aspx>.

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VOTING RECUSAL PROVISIONS

“ When legislators are faced with a potential conflict of interest, in most states they can turn to specific regulations and procedures on when and how to handle the conflict. These may differ from chamber to chamber within the same state.

The table below lists 50 state voting recusal provisions, or when legislators must recuse themselves from voting. [Definitions of Conflict of Interest](#) also guide legislators in determining whether or not a conflict exists.

[AL](#) | [AK](#) | [AZ](#) | [AR](#) | [CA](#) | [CO](#) | [CT](#) | [DE](#) | [FL](#) | [GA](#) | [HI](#) | [ID](#) | [IL](#) | [IN](#) | [IA](#) | [KS](#) | [KY](#) | [LA](#) | [ME](#) | [MD](#) | [MA](#) | [MI](#) | [MN](#) | [MS](#) | [MO](#) | [MT](#) | [NE](#) | [NV](#) | [NH](#) | [NJ](#) | [NM](#) | [NY](#) | [NC](#) | [ND](#) | [OH](#) | [OK](#) | [OR](#) | [PA](#) | [RI](#) | [SC](#) | [SD](#) | [TN](#) | [TX](#) | [UT](#) | [VT](#) | [VA](#) | [WA](#) | [WV](#) | [WI](#) | [WY](#) |

State	Voting Recusal Provisions
Alabama	<p>Alabama Constitution, Section 82: A member of the legislature who has a personal or private interest in any measure or bill proposed or pending before the legislature, shall disclose the fact to the house of which he is a member, and shall not vote thereon. Senate Rule: none found.</p> <p>House Rule 32: Members can vote "in absentia."</p> <p>Alabama Code 36-25-5: A member of a legislative body may not vote for any legislation in which he or she knows or should have known that he or she has a conflict of interest.</p> <p>A conflict of interest involves any action, inaction, or decision by a public official in the discharge of his or her official duties which would materially affect his or her financial interest or those of his or her family members or any business with which the person is associated in a manner different from the manner it affects the other members of the class to which he or she belongs.</p> <p>A conflict of interest shall exist when a member of a legislative body has a substantial financial interest by reason of ownership of, control of, or the exercise of power over any interest greater than five percent of the value of any corporation, company, association or firm, partnership, proprietorship, or any other business entity of any kind or character which is uniquely affected by proposed or pending legislation; or who is an officer or director for any such corporation, company, association, or firm, partnership, proprietorship, or any other business entity of any kind or character which is uniquely affected by proposed or pending legislation.</p>
Alaska	<p>Uniform Rule 34: The chamber can permit a legislator to abstain "for special reasons." Motions to excuse a member from voting must be made before the house divides or before the call for yeas and nays. Members requesting to abstain may make brief oral statement of reasons. The question of granting permission to abstain shall be taken without further debate. A member may not be permitted to abstain except upon the unanimous consent of the membership.</p> <p>Alaska Statutes 24.60.030: Unless required by the Uniform Rules of the Alaska State Legislature, a legislator may not vote on a question if the legislator has an equity or ownership interest in a business, investment, real property, lease, or other enterprise if the interest is substantial and the effect on that interest of the action to be voted on is greater than the effect on a substantial class of persons to which the legislator belongs as a member of a profession, occupation, industry, or region</p> <p>(e) A legislator may not directly, or by authorizing another to act on the legislator's behalf, (1) agree to, threaten to, or state or imply that the legislator will take or withhold a legislative, administrative, or political action, including support or opposition to a bill, employment, nominations, and appointments, as a result of a person's decision to provide or not provide a political contribution, donate or not donate to a cause favored by the legislator, or provide or not provide a thing of value;</p> <p>(2) state or imply that the legislator will perform or refrain from performing a lawful constituent service as a result of a person's decision to provide or not provide a political contribution, donate or not donate to a cause favored by the legislator, or provide or not provide a thing of value; or (3) unless required by the Uniform Rules of the Alaska State Legislature, take or withhold official action or exert official influence that could substantially benefit or harm the financial interest of another person with whom the legislator is negotiating for employment.</p>
Arizona	<p>Senate Rule 15, 29, 30: Legislators can declare a personal financial interest in a matter when they are called upon to vote. They can either abstain or vote. In either case, they must write a statement describing the matter and the nature of the potential interest as soon as they are aware of the conflict. They must give this public record to the Senate president, the chair of the ethics committee and the secretary of the Senate. If he abstains he must also state the reasons for abstaining before the body and it is recorded in the journal. If they become aware of the conflict during a committee, subcommittee, or caucus meeting, or on the floor, they can report the conflict as soon as possible after</p>

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	<p>adjournment. A personal financial interest exists if it is reasonably foreseeable that an action in the discharge of his official duties will have a material financial benefit or detriment either directly or indirectly on the member, his spouse or any minor child of whom he has legal custody, except that no personal financial interest exists if the legislator or such member of his household is a member of a class of persons and it reasonably appears that a majority of the total membership of that class is to be affected by such action. A member who has a substantial interest as defined by section 38-502, Arizona Revised Statutes, shall comply with title 38, chapter 3, article 8, Arizona Revised Statutes.</p> <p>29. No member shall: 6. Participate in any action of the Senate if the member has a substantial interest as defined in section 38-502, Arizona Revised Statutes.</p> <p>House Rules 14, 35: Legislators can declare a personal financial interest in a matter when they are called upon to vote. They can either abstain or vote. In either case, they must write a statement describing the matter and the nature of the potential interest as soon as they are aware of the conflict. When a member declines to vote, the member shall be required to specify the reason. If a member declares a personal financial interest in the question and the member has failed to file a statement pursuant or if the reason given is other than a personal financial interest in the question, a vote of the body can allow him to abstain. If he abstains he must also state the reasons for abstaining before the body and it is recorded in the journal. A member who anticipates taking an action in the discharge of his official duties in which he may have a personal financial interest must prepare a statement describing the matter to be acted upon and the nature of the conflict, and file the statement with the Speaker, chair of the ethics committee and the chief clerk. If they become aware of the conflict during a committee, subcommittee, or caucus meeting, or on the floor, they can report the conflict as soon as possible after adjournment. A personal financial interest exists if it is reasonably foreseeable that an action in the discharge of his official duties will have a material financial benefit or detriment either directly or indirectly on the member, his spouse or any minor child of whom he has legal custody, except that no personal financial interest exists if the legislator or such member of his household is a member of a class of persons and it reasonably appears that a majority of the total membership of that class is to be affected by such action. A member who has a substantial interest as defined by section 38-502, Arizona Revised Statutes, shall comply with title 38, chapter 3, article 8, Arizona Revised Statutes.</p> <p>Arizona Revised Statutes 38-503: Any public officer (legislators are included) or employee who has, or whose relative has, a substantial interest in any decision of a public agency (legislature is included) shall make known such interest in the official records of such public agency and shall refrain from participating in any manner as an officer or employee in such decision.</p>
Arkansas	<p>Senate Rule 24.07: A Senator can't take part in the discussion of, or vote on, a question in committee or on the floor on any matter if he knows that: He or a family member or an associated business will benefit from the legislative action to a greater extent than other member of his occupation or business or The matter will specifically relate to a business which employs the senator or in which he receives compensation as an attorney or consultant, unless the benefit accrues generally to other similar businesses, professions, occupations or groups. None of the above rules apply if the Senator discloses any financial interests he may have on the issue. Disclosure entails a written statement in the Journal, or with the staff of the appropriate interim committee. Disclosure should detail the source of compensation or financial interests held.</p> <p>House Rule 5: Each member is expected to vote unless he or she has an immediate personal interest.</p> <p>Ark. Code Ann. § 21-8-803: A legislator who is required to take an action in the discharge of his or her official duties which may affect his or her financial interest or cause financial benefit or detriment to him or her, or a business in which he or she is an officer, director, stockholder owning more than 10% of the stock of the company, owner, trustee, partner, or employee, which is distinguishable from the effects of the action on the public generally or a broad segment of the public, shall prepare a written statement describing the matter requiring action and stating the potential conflict.</p>
California	<p>Joint Rule 44: Members can't participate, by voting or other action on the floor or in committee, on matters in which they have a personal interest, except they may participate in the final vote if they first file a statement that declares the interest and states that the legislator is able to cast a fair and objective vote regardless.</p> <p>If a member wishes to abstain from voting on a matter in which he has a personal interest, he must tell the presiding officer before the vote starts. He shall be excused from voting without any entry in the Journal. If either house invokes the rule that everyone present must vote, the presiding officer shall order the member excused and order an entry in the Journal stating that the person was excused from voting pursuant to law.</p> <p>A person has an interest that is in substantial conflict if he would derive a direct monetary gain or loss because of his action. He is not considered to have an interest in substantial conflict if any benefit or detriment accrues to him as a member of a business, profession, occupation or group to no greater extent than the rest of that group.</p> <p>California Government Code 87102.5: If a member of the legislature has a financial interest in a matter, he cannot:</p> <p>Introduce nongeneral legislation related to that matter as a lead author; Vote in a legislative committee or subcommittee on related nongeneral legislation; Participate in a rollcall vote on the Senate or Assembly floor on related nongeneral legislation.</p> <p>If the member has received any earned income within the preceding 12 months from a lobbyist employer, the member cannot take action on a matter if the action will have a direct and significant financial impact on the lobbyist employer. The impact must be greater on this lobbyist employer than it would be on a significant segment of the public.</p> <p>If the member has appeared before a local board or agency on behalf of someone for compensation, the member cannot vote on any legislation that would affect the person who paid him if the affect would be greater to that person than it would be to a significant segment of the public.</p>
Colorado	<p>Colorado Constitution Art 5, Sec. 43: A member of the General Assembly who has a "personal or private interest" in pending legislation must disclose the fact of such interest and may not vote on the legislation.</p> <p>Senate Rule 17, 41: Senators shall not vote on bills in which they have personal or private interests. If this is the case, they must disclose those interests before being excused. A senators is considered to have personal or private interests in measures if he:</p>



	<p>Has substantial economic interests in the measure distinct from those held generally by members of the same occupation or business, of if a close relative has such an interest,</p> <p>Has an interest in an enterprise that would be affected by the proposed legislation differently from like enterprises,</p> <p>Has a close relative or a close economic association with someone who has a financial interest in an enterprise that would be affected differently from others,</p> <p>Has a close economic association with, or has a relative who is, a lobbyist or lobbyist employer who is influencing legislation on which the legislator would be expected to vote,</p> <p>Accepts a gift, loan, service or other economic opportunity from someone who would be affected by or has interest in an enterprise that would be affected by the legislation. This provision applies when close relatives of a senator accept the same.</p> <p>Senators are always allowed to vote for something that would adversely affect their personal or private interests.</p> <p>House Rule 21: A request by a member to be excused from voting shall be made before the call for the ayes and noes has begun; any member desiring to be excused from voting on a question shall make a brief statement of the reasons therefor, and the question shall be put without further debate. A member who has an immediate personal or financial interest in any bill or measure proposed or pending before the General Assembly shall disclose the fact to the House, and shall not vote upon such bill or measure.</p> <p>Colorado Revised Statutes 24-18-107. Ethical principles for members of the general assembly. ... In deciding whether or not he has a personal or private interest, a member shall consider, among other things, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Whether the interest impedes his independence of judgment; (b) The effect of his participation on public confidence in the integrity of the general assembly; and (c) Whether his participation is likely to have any significant effect on the disposition of the matter. <p>An interest situation does not arise from legislation affecting the entire membership of a class. If a member of the general assembly elects to disclose the interest, he shall do so as provided in the rules of the house of representatives or the senate, but in no case shall failure to disclose constitute a breach of the public trust of legislative office.</p>
Connecticut	<p>Senate Rule 15: No member who is interested in the decision of any question in such a manner that he cannot vote thereon may stay in the Senate when the question is discussed or decided.</p> <p>House Rule 40: The speaker has authority to excuse someone from voting who is present in the chamber.</p> <p>Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 1-85: A public official, (legislators are public officials) who has a substantial conflict may not take official action on the matter.</p> <p>A substantial conflict occurs when a public official has reason to believe or expect that he, his spouse, a dependent child, or a business with which he is associated will derive a direct monetary gain or suffer a direct monetary loss, as the case may be, by reason of his official activity. It is not considered a substantial conflict if the benefit or detriment accrues to him, his spouse, a dependent child, or a business with which he, his spouse or such dependent child is associated as a member of a profession, occupation or group to no greater extent than any other member of such profession, occupation or group.</p>
Delaware	<p>Senate Rules: None found.</p> <p>House Rule 16: Members with personal or private interests in measures can't vote on them or take part in related discussion, and must disclose their interests. Non-voting members may answer questions about the bill, though, and may correct wrong information. A member is considered to have a personal or private interest in a measure if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> He or a close relative would receive benefit or harm to a greater extent than other members of the same class or group of people. He or a close relative has a financial interest (more than \$5000 interest) in an enterprise that would benefit or be hurt to a greater degree than similar enterprises. A lobbyist who is a close relative of the legislator is acting to influence passage of the bill. <p>Delaware Code Annotated 1002: A legislator who has a personal or private interest in any measure or bill pending in the General Assembly shall disclose the fact to his chamber and shall not participate in the debate nor vote thereon; provided, that upon the request of any other member, a legislator who has such a personal or private interest may respond to questions concerning any such measure. A personal or private interest in a measure or bill is an interest which tends to impair a legislator's independence of judgment in the performance of his or her legislative duties with respect to that measure or bill. A member is considered to have a conflict that impairs his judgment in the same situations laid out in House Rules above.</p>
Florida	<p>(g) A code of ethics for all state employees and nonjudicial officers prohibiting conflict between public duty and private interests shall be prescribed by law.</p> <p>Senate Rule 1.20, 1.39: A Senator is not disqualified from voting when, in the Senator's judgment, a conflict of interest is present. However, a Senator shall disclose any personal, private, or professional interest in a matter that would inure to that Senator's special private gain or the special gain of any principal to whom the Senator is obligated. Such disclosure concerning a vote during a session shall be filed with the Secretary for reporting in the Journal immediately following the record of the vote. Such disclosure may explain the logic of voting or of his or her disqualification. Disclosure concerning a vote that was not cast during a session should be filed pursuant to section 112.3143(2), Florida Statutes.</p> <p>House Rule 3.1: Members cannot vote on measures that would inure to that members special private gain. The member must disclose the interest that is keeping him from voting. Members must also disclose interests in measures at hand of family members or principals by whom the legislator or his family members are retained or employed.</p> <p>Florida Statutes 112.3143. A state public officer may not vote on any matter that the officer knows would inure to his or her special private gain or loss. Any state public officer who abstains from voting in</p>

	<p>an official capacity upon any measure that the officer knows would inure to the officer's special private gain or loss, or who votes in an official capacity on a measure that he or she knows would inure to the special private gain or loss of any principal by whom the officer is retained or to the parent organization or subsidiary of a corporate principal by which the officer is retained other than an agency as defined in s. 112.312(2); or which the officer knows would inure to the special private gain or loss of a relative or business associate of the public officer, shall make every reasonable effort to disclose the nature of his or her interest as a public record in a memorandum filed with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who shall incorporate the memorandum in the minutes. If it is not possible for the state public officer to file a memorandum before the vote, the memorandum must be filed with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting no later than 15 days after the vote.</p> <p>A member of the Legislature may satisfy the disclosure requirements of this section by filing a disclosure form created pursuant to the rules of the member's respective house if the member discloses the information required by this subsection....If disclosure of specific information would violate confidentiality or privilege pursuant to law or rules governing attorneys, a public officer, who is also an attorney, may comply with the disclosure requirements of this section by disclosing the nature of the interest in such a way as to provide the public with notice of the conflict.</p>
Georgia	<p>Senate Rule 5-1.8: Members can't vote on measures if they, or members of their immediate family, have a direct pecuniary interest that is distinct, unique or peculiar to them.</p> <p>House Rule 134: "... every member within the chamber shall vote unless the member is immediately and particularly interested therein, or unless the member is excused by the house."</p> <p>No additional provisions found in statutes that apply to legislators.</p>
Hawaii	<p>Senate Rule 71: Members with conflicts of interest shall be excused from voting. Situations considered conflicts of interest include those involving monetary interests in the matter at hand; those involving the behavior of the member; and those in which the member's right to a seat in the Senate will be affected by the outcome. Members who believe they have conflicts shall rise and disclose their interests to the Senate president who will rule on whether there is a conflict.</p> <p>House Rule 60.5: Members who believe they have a conflict of interest with the matter at hand shall disclose the interest prior to a vote. Situations considered to be conflicts are the same as those in the Senate. The speaker will rule on whether he thinks the member has a substantial enough conflict to be excused from voting.</p> <p>A conflict of interest means that the legislation affects the member's direct personal familial or financial interest except if a member or relative is part of a class of affected people.</p> <p>No additional provisions found in statute.</p>
Idaho	<p>Senate Rule 39: Senators must disclose any conflicts of interest, he must disclose this conflict to the presiding officer in writing, or to the body. The senator may vote on the issue, or may ask to abstain. A 2/3 vote is necessary to be excused from voting.</p> <p>House Rule 38: If a Senator has a conflict of interest under applicable law, the conflict must be disclosed to the presiding officer in writing or to the body. Upon disclosure of any such conflict, the Senator may vote upon any question or issue to which the conflict relates, unless the Senator requests to be excused.</p> <p>Idaho Code 59-704: A public official shall not take any official action or make a formal decision or formal recommendation concerning any matter where he has a conflict of interest and has failed to disclose such conflict as provided in this section. Disclosure of a conflict does not affect an elected public official's authority to be counted for purposes of determining a quorum and to debate and to vote on the matter, unless the public official requests to be excused from debate and voting at his or her discretion. Legislative public officials who have real or potential conflicts shall disclose the nature of the conflict of interest and/or be subject to the rules of the body of which he/she is a member and shall take all action required under such rules prior to acting on the matter. If a member requests to be excused from voting on an issue which involves a conflict or a potential conflict, and the body of which he is a member does not excuse him, such failure to excuse shall exempt that member from any civil or criminal liability related to that particular issue.</p>
Illinois	<p>No rules found.</p> <p>5 ILCS 420/Sec 3-202: When a legislator must take official action on a legislative matter as to which he has a conflict situation created by a personal, family, or client legislative interest, he should consider the possibility of eliminating the interest creating the conflict situation. If that is not feasible, he should consider the possibility of abstaining from such official action. In making his decision as to abstention, the following factors should be considered;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> whether a substantial threat to his independence of judgment has been created by the conflict situation; the effect of his participation on public confidence in the integrity of the legislature; whether his participation is likely to have any significant effect on the disposition of the matter; the need for his particular contribution, such as special knowledge of the subject matter, to the effective functioning of the legislature. <p>He need not abstain if he decides to participate in a manner contrary to the economic interest which creates the conflict situation. f he does abstain, he should disclose that fact to his respective legislative body.</p> <p>Sec 3-203: When, despite the existence of a conflict situation, a legislator chooses to take official action on a matter, he should serve the public interest, and not the interest of any person.]</p>
Indiana	<p>Senate Rule 4, 89, 90: Senators may request to be excused from voting if they have direct personal or pecuniary interests in the matter. A senator who has a direct personal or pecuniary interest in a piece of legislation which is so substantial as to affect the Senator's independent legislative judgment can participate in committee and floor debate on the legislation if the senator publicly proclaims that interest. Rules also provide guidelines senators should look to when deciding whether to request to be excused from voting: 1. Whether the Senator's interest in the legislation is so substantial as to affect the Senator's independence of judgment with respect to the legislation. 2. To what extent the Senator's interest in the legislation mirrors the interest of the citizenry to which the Senator is directly responsible. 3.The effect of</p>

	<p>the Senator's participation in the voting on the legislation on public confidence in the integrity of the legislature. 4. The need of the Senator's particular contribution, such as special knowledge of the subject matter, to the effective functioning of the legislature. 5. Whether the legislation would have a unique, direct, and material effect on the nonlegislative income of the Senator, a member of the Senator's immediate family or those of a partnership, corporation, or business in which the Senator holds a legal or equitable interest</p> <p>House Rule 47: Members who are immediately and particularly interested in a measure shall ask to be excused and shall not vote on it. Members requesting recusal may make a brief statement, but the question is to be considered without debate.</p> <p>No additional provisions relating to legislators found in statutes.</p> <p>House Code of Ethics: No member of the House of Representatives shall sponsor or case a vote on any legislative matter, except budget or general revenue bills, that might reasonable be expected to directly result in a substantial increase of his or her non-legislative income. Any member of the House of Representatives not voting for this reason shall be considered present for the purpose of determining a quorum. If a significant number of members are so affected, the House of Representatives or a committee thereof, as the case may be, may, by a vote of two-thirds of those voting, permit such members to vote.</p>
Iowa	<p>Senate Rule 23: Senators may abstain from voting by disclosing a personal interest in the matter at hand when called upon to vote. The Senate code of ethics provides guidelines for senators in deciding whether to vote on an issue. The senator should consider, among other things, whether his participation would effect public confidence in the integrity of the legislature and the legislatures' need for the senator's particular special knowledge. A senator with a conflict may participate in floor discussion after he discloses his conflict.</p> <p>House Rule 75, 76: House can excuse a member from voting for special reasons as long as the member asks to be excused before the question is put to a vote. No member shall vote on any question in which the member or the member's immediate family member, as defined in chapter 68B of the Code, has a direct financial interest different from other similarly situated persons or classes of persons of the general public.</p> <p>Iowa Code 68B.2A: If a public servant holds any outside employment or activity that is subject to the official control, inspection, review, audit, or enforcement authority of the person during the performance of the person's duties of office or employment, the public servant shall either cease the outside employment or activity or publicly disclose it and refrain from taking any official action or performing any official duty that would detrimentally affect or create a benefit for the outside employment or activity.</p>
Kansas	<p>Senate Rule 19: Any senator who is directly interested in a question may be excused from voting even though there is a call of the Senate. The member has five minutes to explain why he requests to be excused. Request is granted with 2/3 vote.</p> <p>House Rule 2508: Any member who is directly interested in a question may be excused from voting when there is a call of the House. The member has five minutes to explain why he requests to be excused. Request is granted with 2/3 vote.</p> <p>No additional provisions found in statute or constitution.</p>
Kentucky	<p>No rules found</p> <p>Kentucky Constitution, Section 57: A member who has a personal or private interest in any measure or bill proposed or pending before the General Assembly, shall disclose the fact to the House of which he is a member, and shall not vote thereon upon pain of expulsion.</p> <p>Kentucky Revised Statutes 6.761: A legislator shall not intentionally participate in the discussion of a question in committee or on the floor, vote, or make a decision in his official capacity on any matter:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">In which he, a family member, or the legislator's business associate will derive a direct monetary gain or suffer a direct monetary loss as a result of his vote or decision; or</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Which relates specifically to a business in which he owns or controls an interest of \$10,000 or more, or more than 5%.</p> <p>A legislator may participate and vote on a matter if any benefit or detriment which accrues to him as a member of a business, profession, occupation, or other group, or to a member of his family or a business interest specified above is of no greater extent than the benefit or detriment which accrues generally to other members of the business, profession, occupation, or other group. A member shall disclose his interest by filing a disclosure statement with the clerk or by a verbal announcement to the body. The right of legislators to represent their constituencies, however, is of such major importance that legislators should be barred from voting on matters of direct personal interest only in clear cases and if the matter is particularly personal.</p>
Louisiana	<p>Senate Rule 12.1, 13.60, 13.87: Any member may recuse himself from all committee and floor proceedings related to a measure in which he believes he has a conflict of interest. The Senate can excuse members for "reasons assigned," both on the floor and in committee.</p> <p>House Rule 10.1, 14.9: Any member may recuse himself from all committee and floor proceedings related to a measure in which he believes he has a conflict of interest. Members who recuse themselves are allowed to give a written explanation.</p> <p>Louisiana Revised Statutes §1120 and §1112: If any elected official would be required to vote on a matter which vote would be a violation of R.S. 42:1112, he shall recuse himself from voting. Recusing members can participate in discussion and debate if they disclose the conflict or potential conflict prior to doing so. No public servant, except as provided in R.S. 42:1120, shall participate in a transaction involving the governmental entity in which to his actual knowledge, any of the following persons has a substantial economic interest: members of his immediate family; persons with whom the public servant has a close economic association; prospective employers; persons with whom he is an officer, director, trustee, partner, or employee; persons who are a party to an existing contract with such public servant; or legal entities with whom the member controls or owns interest.</p> <p>A "substantial economic interest" is one that is of greater benefit to the public servant or other person than to a general class or group of persons.</p>
Maine	<p>Joint Rule 104: A member may not vote on any question in committee when that question immediately involves that member's private right, as distinct from the public interest.</p>

	<p>Senate Rule 401: Every Senator who is present shall vote unless excused by the Senate, or excluded by interest.</p> <p>House Rule 401: A member may not vote on any question before the House when that question immediately involves that member's private right as distinct from the public interest. A member who is in the House when a question is put shall vote, unless the presiding officer for reasons excuses that member...A member may not vote on any question before the House when that question immediately involves that member's private right as distinct from the public interest.</p> <p>Maine Revised Statutes Annotated, Title 1, 1014: A Legislator engages in a violation of legislative ethics if that Legislator votes on a question in connection with a conflict of interest in committee or in either body of the Legislature or attempts to influence the outcome of that question unless a presiding officer in accordance with the Joint Rules of the Legislature requires a Legislator to vote or advises the Legislator that there is no conflict in accordance with section 1013, subsection 2, paragraph K. Many situations fall under the state's definition of conflict of interest in section 1014, including, when a legislator or a member of his immediate family has a direct substantial personal financial interest, distinct from that of the general public, in an enterprise which would be financially benefited by proposed legislation, or derives a direct substantial personal financial benefit from close economic association with a person known by the Legislator to have a direct financial interest in an enterprise affected by proposed legislation.</p>
Maryland	<p>Senate Rule 93: A member may not vote on a measure in which he has an immediate personal of financial interest. Members who recuse themselves are noted in the Journal as excused.</p> <p>House Rule 93: A member may not vote on a measure in which he has an immediate personal of financial interest. Members who recuse themselves are noted in the Journal as excused.</p> <p>Maryland Code 15-501: An official may not participate in a matter if he or a qualifying relative has an interest in the matter and knows of that interest. This statute contains a long list of other situations that constitute a conflict serious enough to warrant recusal. Officials must disclose the nature and circumstances of the conflict and may participate or act if: the disqualification would leave a body with less than a quorum capable of acting; the disqualified official or employee is required by law to act; or the disqualified official or employee is the only individual authorized to act.</p>
Massachusetts	<p>Senate Rules 10A: No member of the Senate shall act on a matter before a committee or vote on any question in which his private right is immediately concerned, distinct from the public interest.</p> <p>House Rule 16A: No member shall serve on any committee or vote on any question in which his/her private right is immediately concerned, distinct from the public interest.</p> <p>General Laws of Massachusetts Chapter 268A, Section 6A: Any public official who in the discharge of his official duties would be required knowingly to take an action which would substantially affect such official's financial interests, unless the effect on such an official is no greater than the effect on the general public, shall file a written description of the required action and the potential conflict of interest with the state ethics commission.</p>
Michigan	<p>Senate Rule 1.306: A senator having a personal, private or professional interest in a bill, of which he or she has knowledge, shall not vote on the bill and shall disclose in writing to the Secretary of State his or her interest in the bill. Such an interest is defined as one that would particularly benefit the senator or an individual or entity to whom the senator is financially or legally obligated, or personally related. If a senator votes on a bill in which it may appear that he has a conflict of interest, he may submit a statement explaining his reasons for voting.</p> <p>House Rule 13, 31: A member may abstain from voting because of a potential conflict of interest by rising, announcing his intent not to vote and reserving the right to explain the abstention. The member has the right to have an explanatory statement of at most 100 words printed in the Journal.</p> <p>No additional provisions found in statute or constitution.</p>
Minnesota	<p>Senate Rule 41.1., 41.2, 56.4: Every member shall vote on a roll call vote unless excused by the Senate. A member wishing to be excused from voting may make a brief statement of the reason for making the request. The question on the motion to excuse must be taken without further debate. Members of the Senate shall disclose potential conflicts of interest in the discharge of senatorial duties as provided in Minnesota Statutes, section 10A.07.</p> <p>House Rule 2.05: A member who has an immediate interest in a question must not vote on it. Every other member present before the result of a vote is declared by the presiding officer must vote for or against the matter before the House, unless the House excuses the member from voting. But a member is not required to vote on any matter concerning a memorial resolution. A member who does not vote when the member's name is called must state reasons for not voting. After the vote has been taken but before the presiding officer has announced the result of the vote, the presiding officer must submit to the House the question: "Shall the member, for the reasons stated, be excused from voting?" The question must be decided without debate. After the question is decided, the presiding officer must announce the result of the vote, after which other proceedings about the nonvoting member may take place.</p> <p>Minnesota Statutes 10A.07: A public official who would be required to take an action that would substantially affect the official's financial interests or those of an associated business, unless the effect is no greater than on other members of the official's business classification, profession, or occupation, must prepare a written statement describing the matter requiring action and the nature of the potential conflict of interest and deliver a copy to the presiding officer. If there is insufficient time to comply with this, the public official must orally inform the official body or committee.</p>
Mississippi	<p>Senate Rule 124: No senator shall act in committee or vote on a question in which his private interest, distinct from the public interest, is immediately concerned.</p> <p>House Rule 26: No member shall vote on any question, the result of which he is pecuniarily interested.</p> <p>No additional provisions found in statute.</p>
Missouri	<p>Senate Rules: None found</p> <p>House Rule 89: Every member shall vote on each question put unless he has a direct personal or pecuniary interest in such question.</p> <p>Missouri Revised Statutes 105.461: Any member of the general assembly who has a substantial personal or private interest in any measure before the general assembly, shall, before such official passes on the measure, bill, order or ordinance, file a written report of the nature of the interest with the</p>

	<p>chief clerk of the house of representatives or the secretary of the senate and such statement shall be recorded in the appropriate journal. If the legislator has filed his annual financial disclosure statement, which discloses the basis for the official's substantial personal or private interest or interests that the official may have therein, and that statement is current, this statement is not necessary. Statements may be amended to disclose any subsequently acquired substantial interest at any time before the person passes on any measure, bill, order or ordinance.</p> <p>Missouri Revised Statutes § 105.452: No elected or appointed official or employee of the state or any political subdivision thereof shall: (4) Favorably act on any matter that is so specifically designed so as to provide a special monetary benefit to such official or his spouse or dependent children, including but not limited to increases in retirement benefits, whether received from the state of Missouri or any third party by reason of such act. For the purposes of this subdivision, "special monetary benefit" means being materially affected in a substantially different manner or degree than the manner or degree in which the public in general will be affected or, if the matter affects only a special class of persons, then affected in a substantially different manner or degree than the manner or degree in which such class will be affected. In all such matters such officials must recuse themselves from acting and shall not be relieved by reason of the provisions of section 105.460, except that such official may act on increases in compensation subject to the restrictions of section 13 of article VII of the Missouri Constitution...</p>
Montana	<p>Joint Rule 10-60: A member who has a personal or private interest in any measure or bill proposed or pending before the Legislature shall disclose the fact to the house to which the member belongs.</p> <p>No Senate Rule found.</p> <p>House Rule H50-200: (4) A member who is present shall vote unless the member has disclosed a conflict of interest to the House.</p> <p>Montana Code Ann 2-2-112: A legislator concerned with the possibility of a conflict may briefly present the facts to the committee of that house that is assigned the determination of ethical issues. The committee shall advise the legislator as to whether the legislator should disclose the interest prior to voting on the issue pursuant to the provisions of subsection. A legislator may, subject to legislative rule, vote on an issue on which the legislator has a conflict, after disclosing the interest. When a legislator must take official action on a matter as to which he has a conflict created by a personal or private interest that would directly give rise to an appearance of impropriety as to the legislator's influence, benefit, or detriment in regard to the legislative matter, the legislator shall disclose the interest prior to participating in the official action.</p> <p>In making a decision as to whether to take official action, the legislator shall consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> whether the conflict impedes the legislator's independence of judgment; the effect of the legislator's participation on public confidence in the integrity of the legislature; whether the legislator's participation is likely to have any significant effect on the disposition of the matter; and whether a pecuniary interest is involved or whether a potential occupational, personal, or family benefit could arise from the legislator's participation. <p>A conflict situation does not arise from legislation or legislative duties affecting the membership of a profession, occupation, or class. A legislator who is a member of a profession, occupation, or class affected by legislation is not required to disclose an interest unless the class contained in the legislation is so narrow that the vote will have a direct and distinctive personal impact on the legislator.</p>
Nebraska	<p>No rules found.</p> <p>Nebraska Revised Statutes 49-1499: A member of the Legislature who would be required to take any action that may cause financial benefit or detriment to him or her, a member of his or her immediate family, or a business with which he or she is associated, which is distinguishable from the effects of such action on the public generally or a broad segment of the public, shall disclose information about the conflict in this manner. He shall prepare a written statement describing the matter requiring action or decision and the nature of the potential conflict, and if he or she will not abstain from voting, deliberating, or taking other action on the matter, the statement shall state why, despite the potential conflict, he or she intends to vote or otherwise participate. The statement should be delivered to the ethics commission and the speaker of the legislature.</p> <p>The member of the Legislature may abstain from voting, deliberating, or taking other action on the matter on which the potential conflict exists, in which case he or she may have the reasons for the abstention recorded in the journal or minutes of the Legislature.</p>
Nevada	<p>Senate Rule 23 and Assembly Rule 23: 8. In determining whether a Legislator has a conflict of interest, the Legislator should consider whether the independence of judgment of a reasonable person in his or her situation upon the matter in question would be materially affected by the Legislator's: (a) Acceptance of a gift or loan; (b) Private economic interest; or (c) Commitment to a member of his or her household or immediate family.</p> <p>In interpreting and applying the provisions of this subsection, it must be presumed that the independence of judgment of a reasonable person in the Legislator's situation would not be materially affected by the Legislator's private economic interest or the Legislator's commitment to a member of his or her household or immediate family where the resulting benefit or detriment accruing to the Legislator, or if the Legislator has a commitment to a member of his or her household or immediate family, accruing to those other persons, is not greater than that accruing to any other member of the general business, profession, occupation or group that is affected by the matter.</p> <p>9. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 10, if a Legislator knows he or she has a conflict of interest pursuant to subsection 8, the Legislator shall make a disclosure of the conflict of interest on the record in a meeting of a committee or on the floor of the Senate, as applicable. Such a disclosure must be entered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) If the Legislator makes the disclosure in a meeting of a committee, in the minutes for that meeting. (b) If the Legislator makes the disclosure on the floor of the Senate, in the Journal. <p>10. If, on one or more prior occasions during the current session of the Legislature, a Legislator has made a general disclosure of a conflict of interest on the record in a meeting of a committee or on the floor of the Senate, the Legislator is not required to make that general disclosure at length again regarding the same conflict of interest if, when the matter in question arises on subsequent occasions, the Legislator makes a reference on the record to the previous disclosure.</p>

	<p>11. In determining whether to abstain from voting upon, advocating or opposing a matter concerning which a Legislator has a conflict of interest pursuant to subsection 8, the Legislator should consider whether: (a) The conflict impedes his or her independence of judgment; and (b) His or her interest is greater than the interests of an entire class of persons similarly situated.</p> <p>12. The provisions of this Rule do not under any circumstances and regardless of any conflict of interest: (a) Prohibit a Legislator from requesting or introducing a legislative measure; or (b) Require a Legislator to take any particular action before or while requesting or introducing a legislative measure.</p> <p>13. If a Legislator who is a member of a committee declares on the record when a vote is to be taken by the committee that he or she will abstain from voting because of the requirements of this Rule, the necessary quorum to act upon and the number of votes necessary to act upon the matter is reduced as though the Legislator abstaining were not a member of the committee.</p> <p>14. Except as otherwise provided in the Joint Standing Rules, the standards and procedures set forth in this Rule which govern whether and to what extent a Senator has a conflict of interest, should disclose a conflict of interest or should abstain from voting upon, advocating or opposing a matter concerning which the Senator has a conflict of interest pursuant to subsection 8: (a) Are exclusive and are the only standards and procedures that apply to Senators with regard to such matters; and (b) Supersede and preempt all other standards and procedures with regard to such matters.</p> <p>15. For purposes of this Rule, "immediate family" means a person who is related to the Legislator by blood, adoption or marriage within the first degree of consanguinity or affinity.</p> <p>Nevada Revised Statutes 281A.420: Concerns voting recusal or the ability to vote, but does not apply to state legislators, per part 7. A public officer may vote upon a matter if the benefit or detriment accruing to him as a result of the decision either individually or in a representative capacity as a member of a general business, profession, occupation or group is not greater than that accruing to any other member of the general business, profession, occupation or group. However, in addition to the requirements of the code of ethical standards, a public officer shall not vote upon or advocate the passage or failure of, but may otherwise participate in the consideration of, a matter with respect to which the independence of judgment of a reasonable person in his situation would be materially affected by: (a) His acceptance of a gift or loan; (b) His significant pecuniary interest; or (c) His commitment in a private capacity to the interests of others.</p>
New Hampshire	<p>Senate Rule 2-21, 6-25: No member who was present when the question was put shall abstain from voting unless by reason of a conflict pursuant to Rule 6-25 or unless excused by the Senate for a special reason. In all instances every member shall act in conformance with the duly adopted Ethical Guidelines and Opinions of the New Hampshire General Court.</p> <p>House Rule 107: At each legislative committee meeting, final action on any bill or resolution shall be by roll call. All roll call votes shall appear in the records of the committee as otherwise provided in these rules. In all roll call votes the names of the members voting for the motion, the names of the members voting against the motion, and the names of members not participating because of a conflict of interest, or absent shall be recorded. If a member is present when the question is put, he or she must vote when called unless the member is not participating pursuant to the New Hampshire General Court Ethics Guidelines.</p> <p>General Court's Ethics Guidelines and Procedural Rules, Sections 4 and 5: Legislators shall not become involved in any official activity without complying with the conflict of interest procedure set forth in this document.</p> <p>A conflict of interest declaration is not required if no benefit or detriment could be reasonably expected to accrue to the member or a family member, to a greater than any other member of his or her business, profession, occupation or group, and provided that a disclosure is made via the requirements of the financial disclosure form. A "group" is limited to one that is generally recognized and of a substantial size. When a legislator becomes aware that a conflict of interest exists or may exist and the conditions set forth in paragraph I are not met, the legislator shall declare that the legislator will not participate in any official activity associated with the issue or that the legislator intends to participate in the official activity and will provide a description of the conflict of interest including: names of all entities, both public and private, which might be affected; the nature of any benefit which may accrue to the legislator or legislator's family member; the nature of any financial interest in the issue; the nature of any relationship which existed, exists or may exist between the legislator and any person or entity which might be affected. Additional information may be required. The declaration shall be publicly announced prior to the legislator's initial participation in the official activity. The information required shall be filed with the clerk of the member's respective body within 24 hours of the time of the official activity and be made available for public inspection during normal business hours.</p> <p>Principle Of Independent Objective Judgment. Legislators should employ independent objective judgment in performing their duties, deciding all matters on the merits free from conflicts of interest and both real and apparent improper influences.</p> <p>New Hampshire Revised Statutes, Title 1, 15A: Legislators must disclose areas of potential conflicts on their financial disclosure forms. If their participation in an official activity creates a conflict of interest not disclosed by the information on the form, they must complete and file a Declaration of Intent Form in accordance with section 5 of the Ethics Guidelines. See section 5 of the Ethics Guidelines for information regarding particular conflicts of interest you may have. Even if they disclose a financial interest on this form, they may still have to file a separate Declaration of Intent Form on a particular bill.</p>
New Jersey	<p>No provisions found in rules.</p> <p>New Jersey Statutes Annotated 52:13D-18: No member of the Legislature shall participate by voting or any other action, on the floor of the General Assembly or the Senate, or in committee or elsewhere, in the enactment or defeat of legislation in which he has a personal interest.</p> <p>A member is considered to have a personal interest in legislation if, by reason of his participation in the enactment or defeat of any legislation, he or a member of his immediate family, will derive a direct monetary gain or suffer a direct monetary loss. It is not considered a personal interest if no benefit or</p>

	<p>detriment could reasonably be expected to accrue to him, or a member of his immediate family, as a member of a business, profession, occupation or group, to any greater extent than any such benefit or detriment could reasonably be expected to accrue to any other member of such business, profession, occupation or group.</p>
New Mexico	<p>Senate Rule 7-5, 7-6: Every senator shall vote on each question unless he has a direct personal or pecuniary interest in the event of such a question. A senator desiring to be excused from voting may, when his name is called, make a brief statement for no more than five minutes explaining his reasons. The senate must vote on whether to excuse him.</p> <p>House Rule 7-5, 7-6: Every member of the house shall vote on each question or motion coming up before the house, unless excused by a majority vote. A member who wishes to be excused from voting may make a brief explaining his reasons. Full disclosure of real or potential conflicts of interest shall be a guiding principle for determining appropriate conduct of the members. The code of conduct is in House Rule 26-1.</p> <p>10-16-6: Confidential information. No legislator or public officer or employee shall use or disclose confidential information acquired by virtue of the legislator's or public officer's or employee's position with a state agency or local government agency for the legislator's public officer's or employee's or another's private gain.</p> <p>NMSA 10-16-4 prohibits official acts for personal financial interest for public officers and employees, but the definition of these terms excludes legislators.</p>
New York	<p>Senate Rules IX: Every senator shall vote on each question unless he has a direct personal or pecuniary interest in the event of such a question. Senators wishing to be excused may make a brief statement as to their reasons when they are called upon to vote. The excuse must be approved by 2/3 of the body.</p> <p>Assembly Rule V, Part 2: A member may abstain from a vote only on the grounds that it would constitute a conflict of interest.</p> <p>No additional provisions in statute pertain to legislators voting in conflict of interest situation, but New York Consolidated Laws Chapter 32, Article 4, Section 74 says no member of the legislature should have any interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or engage in any business or transaction or professional activity or incur any obligation which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his duties in the public interest. Substantial conflict is not defined.</p>
North Carolina	<p>Senate Rule 29: Any senator may move to be excused from voting at any time on any matter. If the senator is excused, he may not debate the bill or any amendments. The senator may make a brief oral or written statement as to his reasons. Rules are silent regarding conflicts of interest.</p> <p>House Rule 24.1A: Any member shall, upon request, be excused from the deliberations and voting on a particular bill. The member may make a brief oral or written statement of the reasons for making the request. The member may make a brief oral statement of the reasons for making the request and shall do so if required by the State Government Ethics Act. The member may provide to the Principal Clerk, on a form provided by the Clerk, a concise written statement of the reason for the request, and the Clerk shall include this statement in the Journal. The member excused shall not debate the bill or any amendment that is related to his conflict, though the House can allow the member to debate unrelated amendments.</p> <p>North Carolina General Statutes 138A-37: Except as permitted under G.S. 138A-38, no legislator shall participate in a legislative action if the legislator knows the legislator or a person with which the legislator is associated may incur a reasonably foreseeable financial benefit from the action, and if after considering whether the legislator's judgment would be substantially influenced by the financial benefit and considering the need for the legislator's particular contribution, including special knowledge of the subject matter to the effective functioning of the legislature, the legislator concludes that an actual financial benefit does exist which would impair the legislator's independence of judgment. Legislator must submit in writing to the principal clerk of the house of which the legislator is a member the reasons for the abstention from participation in the legislative matter. If the legislator has a material doubt as to whether the legislator should act, the legislator may submit the question for an advisory opinion to the State Ethics Commission in accordance with G.S. 138A-13 or the Legislative Ethics Committee in accordance with G.S. 120-104.</p> <p>North Carolina General Statutes 138A-38: A covered person may participate in an official action or legislative action under any of the following circumstances except as specifically limited: (1) The only interest or reasonably foreseeable benefit or detriment that accrues to the covered person, the covered person's extended family, business with which the covered person is associated, or nonprofit corporation or organization with which the covered person is associated as a member of a profession, occupation, or general class is no greater than that which could reasonably be foreseen to accrue to all members of that profession, occupation, or general class. (2) When an official or legislative action affects or would affect the covered person's compensation. (3) Before participating in the legislative action, the covered person requested and received from the Commission or Committee a written advisory opinion that authorized the participation. (4) Before participating in an official action, a public servant made full written disclosure to the public servant's employing entity which then made a written determination that the interest or benefit would neither impair the public servant's independence of judgment nor influence the public servant's participation in the official action. The employing entity shall file a copy of that written determination with the Commission. (5) When action is ministerial only and does not require the exercise of discretion. (6) When needed for a quorum, the legislator maybe be only be counted for quorum purposes. If a legislator is employed or retained by, or is an independent contractor of, a governmental unit, and the legislator is the only member of the house elected from the district where that governmental unit is located, then the legislator may take legislative action on behalf of that governmental unit provided the legislator discloses in writing to the principal clerk the nature of the relationship with the governmental unit prior to, or at the time of, taking the legislative action. (7) When a public servant notifies the Commission in writing that the public servant, or someone whom the public servant appoints to act in the public servant's stead, or both, are the only individuals having legal authority to take an official action, and the public servant discloses in writing the circumstances and nature of the conflict of interest. This section shall not allow participation in an official action prohibited by (benefiting from public contracts).</p> <p>Notwithstanding G.S. 138A-37, if a legislator is employed or retained by, or is an independent contractor</p>

	<p>of, a governmental unit, and the legislator is the only member of the house elected from the district where that governmental unit is located, then the legislator may take legislative action on behalf of that governmental unit provided the legislator discloses in writing to the principal clerk the nature of the relationship with the governmental unit prior to, or at the time of, taking the legislative action.</p> <p>Notwithstanding G.S. 138A-36, service by the president, chief financial officer, chief administrative officer, or voting member of the board of trustees of a community college as an officer, employee, or member of the board of directors of a nonprofit corporation established under G.S. 115D-20(9) to support the community college shall not constitute a conflict of interest under G.S. 138A-36, provided that the majority of the nonprofit corporation's board of directors is not comprised of the president, chief financial officer, and chief administrative officer, or voting members of the board of trustees of the community college which the nonprofit corporation was created to support.</p>
North Dakota	<p>Joint Rule 1002: In striving to maintain ethical standards, each member should recognize the importance of complying with all other rules relating to ethics, including Senate and House Rules 321 regarding disclosure of personal or private interest when voting.</p> <p>Senate and House Rule 321: Any member who has a personal or private interest in a bill shall disclose that fact to the Senate and may not vote thereon without the consent of the Senate. A personal or private interest is one that affects the member directly, individually, uniquely and substantially.</p> <p>No additional provisions found in statute.</p>
Ohio	<p>Senate Rule 58, 61: No senator shall vote upon any question in contravention of the Legislative Code of Ethics or in violation of section 102.031 of the Revised Code. Any senator requesting to be excused from voting may briefly explain the reason for such request, and the Senate shall pass upon the request without debate.</p> <p>House Rule 57: A request to be excused from voting shall be accompanied by a brief written statement of the reasons for making such request, which shall be acted upon by the House without debate. Rules are silent regarding conflicts of interest.</p> <p>Legislative Code of Ethics, Section 4: A member who has a substantial personal interest in legislation may request permission of the chair to abstain from voting on the legislation and may state the member's reason for the request. The request shall be granted by the chair or the member's respective chamber of the General Assembly pursuant to the rules of that chamber. The request and permission to abstain shall be entered in the Journal.</p> <p>Legislative Code of Ethics/Ohio Revised Code 102.031: No member of the General Assembly shall vote on any legislation that is then being actively advocated by a lobbyist who is (1) an employee, (2) a business associate, or (3) a person, other than an employer who is hired under contract to perform certain services and such position involves a substantial and material exercise of administrative discretion in the formulation of public policy.</p>
Oklahoma	<p>Oklahoma Constitution, Article V, Section 24: A member of the Legislature, who has a personal or private interest in any measure shall disclose the fact to the House of which he is a member, and shall not vote thereon.</p> <p>Senate Rule: none found.</p> <p>House Rule 4.2: A member who has a personal or private interest in any bill or resolution, proposed or pending before the House, shall disclose that fact to the House, and shall not vote on that bill or resolution, as required by Article V, Section 24 of the Oklahoma Constitution.</p> <p>Oklahoma statutes, 257-20-1-7: Votes, deliberations, and discussions by legislators or statewide elective officers. (a) A legislator or statewide elective officer shall not introduce or cause to have introduced, request the introduction of, promote, or vote on any legislation if the statewide elective officer or legislator or a child adopted child, step-child or spouse of the officer or legislator or a business or entity with which the legislator or officer or a member of the immediate family of the legislator or officer is associated has: (1) a pecuniary interest in; or (2) a reasonably foreseeable benefit from; the legislation.</p>
Oregon	<p>Senate Rule 3.33: When involved in a potential conflict of interest as defined by ORS 244.020, a member shall announce, on the Senate floor or in the committee meeting, the nature of the potential conflict prior to voting on the issue giving rise to the potential conflict. The member's announcement shall be recorded in the Journal or in the committee minutes. In addition, the member may file a statement with his chamber. If a member suspects that another member is not disclosing a conflict, he may file a complaint and an investigation will ensue.</p> <p>House Rule 3.21: When involved in an actual or potential conflict of interest, as defined by ORS 244.020, a member shall announce, on the floor or in the committee meeting, the nature of the potential conflict prior to voting on the issue giving rise to the potential conflict. The member's announcement of an actual or potential conflict of interest shall be recorded in the Journal or in the committee minutes. In addition, the member may file in writing a statement of the nature of the potential conflict with the Chief Clerk or the committee assistant by 5 pm the next business day following the vote.</p> <p>Oregon Revised Statutes 244.120: When met with an actual or potential conflict of interest, a member of the Legislative Assembly shall announce publicly, pursuant to rules of the house of which the public official is a member, the nature of the conflict before taking any action thereon in the capacity of a public official.</p> <p>Oregon Revised Statutes 244.020: "Actual conflict of interest" means any action, decision or recommendation by a person acting in a capacity as a public official, the effect of which would be to the private pecuniary benefit or detriment of the person or the person's relative or any business with which the person or a relative of the person is associated unless the pecuniary benefit or detriment arises out of circumstances described in subsection (11) of this section.</p> <p>Subsection (11) "Potential conflict of interest" means any action or any decision or recommendation by a person acting in a capacity as a public official, the effect of which could be to the private pecuniary benefit or detriment of the person or the person's relative, or a business with which the person or the person's relative is associated, unless the pecuniary benefit or detriment arises out of an interest or membership in a particular business, industry, occupation or other class required by law as a prerequisite to the holding by the person of the office or position; any action in the person's official capacity which would affect to the same degree a class consisting of all inhabitants of the state, or a smaller class consisting of an industry, occupation or other group including one of which or in which the person, or the person's relative or business with which the person or the person's relative is associated, is a member or is engaged; or membership in or membership on the board of directors of a nonprofit corporation that is tax-exempt under section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code.</p>

Pennsylvania	<p>Pa. Constitution, Article 3, Section 13: A member who has a personal or private interest in any measure or bill proposed or pending before the General Assembly shall disclose the fact to the House of which he is a member, and shall not vote thereon.</p> <p>Senate Rule 16, 20: ...no member of a committee shall be required or permitted to vote on any questions immediately concerning that member's direct personal, private or pecuniary interest. A Senator desiring to be excused from voting due to a direct, personal, private or pecuniary interest in any question or bill proposed or pending before the Senate, shall seek a ruling from the presiding officer. Senators who seek a ruling on whether they have a direct, personal, private or pecuniary interest in any question or bill proposed or pending before the Senate shall, after the Senator is recognized by the presiding officer, make a brief statement of the reasons for making the request and ask the presiding officer to decide whether or not the Senator must vote. The question shall be decided by the presiding officer without debate.</p> <p>House Rule 65: A member who has a personal or private interest in any measure or bill proposed or pending before the House shall disclose the fact to the House and shall not vote thereon.</p> <p>Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, Title 65, Part II, Chapter 11, 1103: Where voting conflicts are not otherwise addressed by the constitution of Pennsylvania or by any law, rule, regulation, order or ordinance, the following procedure shall be employed. Any public official who in the discharge of his official duties would be required to vote on a matter that would result in a conflict of interest shall abstain from voting and, prior to the vote being taken, publicly announce and disclose the nature of his interest as a public record in a written memorandum filed with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting at which the vote is taken, except that if a quorum is not present once the person with the conflict recuses himself, he is permitted to vote as long as the conflict is properly disclosed.</p>
Rhode Island	<p>Senate Rules: None found.</p> <p>House Rule 32, 33: No member shall vote on any question of private property in the event of which he or she is immediately and particularly interested. No member shall speak or vote, unless within the bar of the House and at his or her seat, except as hereinafter provided. Every member who shall be in his or her seat in the House Chamber when the question is put, shall give his or her vote, unless prior thereto the Speaker shall have excused him or her in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Ethics statute (RIGL 36-14- Members must file a written request for recusal and the journal shall reflect such recusal with the letter "R."</p> <p>Rhode Island General Laws 36-14-6: Legislators who are required to take an action, make a decision, or refrain therefrom that will or can reasonably be expected to directly result in an economic benefit to the person, or spouse (if not estranged), or any dependent child, business associate or any business by which the person is employed or which the person represents, shall file a sworn statement describing the conflict and file it with the ethics commission and the presiding officer. If the legislator does not request to be excused from voting, he shall state why he can participate fairly and in the public interest despite the conflict.</p>
South Carolina	<p>Senate Rules: None found.</p> <p>House Rules 3.1: No member shall be permitted to vote on any question immediately concerning his private rights as distinct from the public interest.</p> <p>South Carolina Code 8-13-700: A public official who, in the discharge of his official responsibilities, is required to take an action or make a decision which affects an economic interest of himself, a member of his immediate family, an individual with whom he is associated, or a business with which he is associated shall file with the presiding officer a statement describing the matter and the nature of the conflict of interest. The presiding officer shall excuse the member from participating in the matter.</p>
South Dakota	<p>Joint Rule 12-1: Either body may excuse a member from voting.</p> <p>No additional provisions found in statute or constitution.</p>
Tennessee	<p>Senate Rule 13: When a member of this body arises to address himself to a bill, section thereof, or amendment in which he has a personal interest, he shall state to the Speaker and members of the body "that it may be considered that I have a degree of personal interest in the subject matter of this bill, but I declare that my argument and my ultimate vote answer only to my conscience and to my obligation to my constituents and the citizens of the State of Tennessee."</p> <p>Senate Code of Ethics: Article 2, Section 2: (a) No Senator shall vote on or influence any legislation before a committee or on the floor of either House, if the Senator has a personal interest that conflicts with the proper discharge of his or her duties (as defined by Section 1) unless the Senator declares, either orally or in writing filed with the Chief Clerk, "It may be considered that I have a degree of personal interest in the subject matter of this legislation, but I declare that my argument and my ultimate vote answer only to my conscience and my obligation to my constituents and the citizens of the State of Tennessee."</p> <p>(b) No Senator shall violate the provisions of T.C.A. Sections 2-10-123, 3-6-304, 3-6-305, or 39-16-102, nor shall any Senator otherwise misuse the Senator's office for personal financial gain.</p> <p>(i) No Senator shall use the Senator's office either to grant or to obtain special privilege, exemption, or preferential treatment to or for him or herself.</p> <p>House Rules: None found.</p> <p>No additional provisions found in statute.</p>
Texas	<p>Texas Constitution Article 3, Section 22: A member who has a personal or private interest in any measure or bill, proposed, or pending before the Legislature, shall disclose the fact to the House, of which he is a member, and shall not vote thereon.</p> <p>Senate Rules: None found</p> <p>House Rule 5, Part E, Section 42: Any member who has a personal or private interest in any measure or bill shall disclose the fact and not vote thereon.</p> <p>Texas Government Code 572.0531: Before introducing, sponsoring or voting on a bill on a subject area in which a lobbyist who is the legislator's spouse or first degree relative, the legislator must file a disclosure statement.</p> <p>Texas Government Code 572.053: A member of the legislature may not vote on a measure or a bill, other than a measure that will affect an entire class of business entities, that will directly benefit a specific business transaction of a business entity in which the member has a controlling interest."Controlling</p>

	<p>interest" includes: an ownership interest or participating interest by virtue of shares, stock, or otherwise that exceeds 10 percent; membership on the board of directors or other governing body of the business entity; or service as an officer of the business entity.</p>
Utah	<p>Joint Rule 6-1-102 and -201: While in session, members of the Senate and House shall disclose any conflict of interest on any legislation or legislative matter. If a legislator reasonably believes he may have a conflict of interest, that legislator should, before the vote, orally declare to the committee or body before which the matter is pending that the legislator may have a conflict of interest and what that conflict is. This declaration of conflict of interest shall be noted in the minutes of any committee meeting or in the Journal. A legislator shall file a Declaration of Conflict of Interest form with the Secretary of the Senate if the legislator is a Senator or with the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives if the legislator is a Representative. This form shall include the general legislative areas in which the legislator may have a conflict of interest. A "conflict of interest" is defined below. This form satisfies that legislator's disclosure of any conflicts of interest as required by the first paragraph and Utah Code Annotated Section 76-8-109. The legislator may then vote on the matter. The rule specifies that any such disclosure shall not prevent legislators from voting on any legislation or legislative matter.</p> <p>Senate Rule 2-3-10, 4-7-103: Immediately preceding or during the roll call or when casting a roll call vote, a senator may, upon recognition of the presiding officer, make a brief statement explaining any conflict of interest.</p> <p>House Rule 2-3-101: See Joint Rule above. House rules specify that if a legislator does not speak on legislation or a legislative matter, and has already disclosed conflicts on his financial disclosure form, he does not need to orally disclose the conflict.</p> <p>Joint Rule 6-1-201 and Utah Code 76-8-109: If a legislator must vote on a matter in which he has actual knowledge of a conflict of interest which is not stated on his conflict of interest form, he shall declare this conflict to the body. The declaration shall be noted in the minutes or the Journal. Legislators must also file a declaration of conflict of interest form with the secretary of the senate or chief clerk of the house. "Conflict of interest" means legislation or action by a legislator that the legislator reasonably believes may cause direct financial benefit or detriment to him, a member of the legislator's immediate family, or a business in which the legislator is associated, and that benefit or detriment is distinguishable from the effects of that action on the public or on the legislator's profession, occupation, or association generally.</p>
Vermont	<p>Senate Rule 71: No senator shall be permitted to vote upon any question in which he or she is directly or immediately interested.</p> <p>House Rule 75: Members shall not be permitted to vote upon any question in which they are immediately or directly interested.</p> <p>No additional provisions found in statutes or constitution.</p>
Virginia	<p>Senate Rule 20, 36: A Senator who has a personal interest in a transaction, as defined in § 30-101 of the Code of Virginia, before the entire Senate or a committee, shall neither vote nor be counted upon it, and he shall withdraw, or invoke this rule not to be counted, prior to the division and the fact shall be recorded on the voting machine. If a Senator invokes this rule, the Senator shall not participate, directly or indirectly, in the matter wherein the rule is invoked.</p> <p>House Rules 69: No member who has an immediate and personal interest in the result of the question shall either vote or be counted upon it.</p> <p>Code of Virginia 30-108: A legislator who has a personal interest in a transaction shall disqualify himself from participating in the transaction. Unless otherwise prohibited by the rules of his house, the disqualification requirement of this section shall not prevent any legislator from participating in discussions and debates, provided (i) he verbally discloses his personal interest at the outset of the discussion and (ii) he does not vote on the transaction.</p>
Washington	<p>Washington Constitution Article II, Section 30: A member who has a private interest in any bill or measure proposed or pending before the legislature, shall disclose the fact to the house of which he is a member, and shall not vote thereon.</p> <p>Senate Rule 22: No senator shall be allowed to vote upon any question upon which he or she is in any way personally or directly interested (See also Art. 2, Secs. 27 and 30, State Constitution.). A member not voting by reason of personal or direct interest may explain the reason for not voting by a brief statement not to exceed fifty words in the journal.</p> <p>House Rule 19: No member shall vote on any question which affects that member privately and particularly. A member who has a private interest in any bill or measure proposed or pending before the legislature shall disclose the fact to the house of which he is a member, and shall not vote thereon. (Art. II § 30)</p>
West Virginia	<p>Senate Rule 43: Every member within the Senate Chamber, when a question is put, shall vote unless he or she is immediately and particularly interested therein, meaning an interest that affects the member directly and not as one of a class, or the Senate excuses him or her. All motions to excuse a member from voting must be made by the member requesting to be excused before the Senate divides, or before the call of the yeas and nays is commenced, and it shall be decided without debate, except that the member making the motion to be excused from voting may briefly state the reason why it ought to be adopted.</p> <p>House Rule 49: When a question is put, any member having a direct personal or pecuniary interest therein should announce this fact and request to be excused from voting. The disqualifying interest must be such as affects the member directly and not as one of a class.</p> <p>West Virginia Statutes 6B-2-5: (i) Members of the Legislature required to vote. -- Members of the Legislature who have asked to be excused from voting or who have made inquiry as to whether they should be excused from voting on a particular matter and who are required by the presiding officer of the House of Delegates or Senate of West Virginia to vote under the rules of the particular house shall not be guilty of any violation of ethics under the provisions of this section for a vote so cast.</p> <p>(j) Public officials, excluding members of the Legislature who are governed by subsection (i) of this section, may not vote on the following:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">If a public official is employed by a financial institution and his or her primary responsibilities include consumer and commercial lending, the public official may not vote on a matter which directly affects the financial interests of a customer of the financial institution if the public official is directly involved in approving a loan request from the person or business appearing before the</p>

	<p>governmental body or if the public official has been directly involved in approving a loan for that person or business within the past 12 months. This limitation only applies if the total amount of the loan or loans exceeds fifteen thousand dollars;</p> <p>A personnel matter involving the public official's spouse or relative;</p> <p>The appropriations of public moneys or the awarding of a contract to a nonprofit corporation if the public official or an immediate family member is employed by the nonprofit.</p> <p>A public official may vote if the public official, his or her spouse, immediate family members or relatives or business with which they are associated are affected as a member of, and to no greater extent than any other member of a profession, occupation, class of persons or class of businesses. A class shall consist of not fewer than five similarly situated persons or businesses.</p> <p>If the matter affects a publicly traded company when:</p> <p>(i) The public official, or dependent family members individually or jointly own less than five percent of the issued stock in the publicly traded company and the value of the stocks individually or jointly owned is less than ten thousand dollars; and</p> <p>(ii) Prior to casting a vote the public official discloses his or her interest in the publicly traded company.</p> <p>For a public official's recusal to be effective, it is necessary to excuse him or herself from participating in the discussion and decision-making process by physically removing him or herself from the room during the period, fully disclosing his or her interests, and recusing him or herself from voting on the issue.</p>
Wisconsin	<p>Senate Rule 73, Assembly Rule 77: Either body may excuse a member from voting by "special cause."</p> <p>Wisconsin Statutes 19.46: No state public official may take any official action substantially affecting a matter in which the official, a member of his or her immediate family, or an organization with which the official is associated has a substantial financial interest.</p>
Wyoming	<p>Senate Rule 12-2: A member who has a personal or private interest in any bill shall disclose the fact to the Senate members at the time of initial consideration during the committee of the whole or at the time of introduction during the budget session. If the status of the conflict changes during the legislative process, the member shall disclose the change in the status of the conflict. Disclosures of a conflict of interest shall be entered in the Daily Journal. If a member is uncertain about a conflict, he can request a ruling from the rules committee and the rules committee shall rule by majority vote if the member should or should not vote on the bill in question.</p> <p>House Rule 12-3: A member who has a personal or private interest in any bill shall disclose the fact to the house members at the time of initial consideration during committee of the whole or at the first time the conflict becomes apparent to the declarer, or at the time of introduction during the budget session and shall not vote thereon. On general appropriation and recodification bills a member who has declared a conflict of interest on a section or an amendment to a section shall not vote on that section, but may vote on the entire bill. Such disclosures will be entered into the journal.</p> <p>"Personal or private interest" means the member shall receive or incur a direct financial gain or loss if the measure or bill is enacted. "Personal or private interest" does not include a financial gain or loss which shall be received or incurred by a member if the gain or loss shall also be received or incurred by a substantial class of persons. If a member is uncertain about a conflict, he can request a ruling from the rules committee and the rules committee shall rule by majority vote if the member should or should not vote on the bill in question.</p> <p>Wyoming Statutes 9-13-106: A public official shall not make an official decision or vote on an official decision if he has a personal or private interest in the matter. In determining whether he has a personal or private interest in a matter, the public official shall recognize the importance of his right to represent his constituency and shall abstain from voting only in clear cases of a personal or private interest as defined in this subsection. A public official or public member shall not vote to give money or any direct financial benefit to himself except for tax reductions affecting the general public. For the purposes of this section, a personal or private interest must (i) be direct and immediate as opposed to speculative and remote; and (ii) provide the public official, public employee or public member a greater benefit or a lesser detriment than it does for a large or substantial group or class of persons who are similarly situated. A public official shall abstain from voting on the decision and from making any official decision in the matter. The public official's abstention from voting must be recorded in the governmental entity's official records.</p> <p>Wyoming Statutes 16-6-118: Unlawful interest of officeholders in public contracts or works; exception. It is unlawful for any person, now or hereafter holding any office, either by election or appointment, under the constitution or laws of this state, to become in any manner interested, either directly or indirectly, in his own name or in the name of any other person or corporation, in any contract, or the performance of any work in the making or letting of which the officer may be called upon to act or vote. It is unlawful for any officer to represent, either as agent or otherwise, any person, company or corporation, in respect of any application or bid for any contract or work in regard to which the officer may be called upon to vote or to take or receive, or offer to take or receive, either directly or indirectly, any money or other thing of value, as a gift or bribe, or means of influencing his vote or action in his official character. Any contracts made and procured in violation of this subsection are null and void and the person violating this subsection may be removed from office. If any person is interested in any public contract or shall represent any person, company or corporation, but shall disclose the nature and extent thereof to all the contracting parties concerned therewith and shall absent himself during the considerations and vote thereon and not attempt to influence any of the contracting parties and not act directly or indirectly for the governing body in inspection, operation, administration or performance of any contract, then the acts are not unlawful under this section. This section does not apply as to the operation, administration, inspection or performance of banking and deposit contracts and relationships after the selection of a depository.</p>

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Conflict of Interest Definitions

Updated February 2014

Whether it be in state constitution, statute or rule, all states address the potential of conflicts of interests for legislators. Definitions usually specify that a legislator may not have a personal or private interest or gain in a financial way by votes and in their legislative duties. States differ on how to handle the conflict - for more information on conflicts of interest and voting, visit our information on [Voting Recusal Provisions](#).

This table is intended to provide general information and does not necessarily address all aspects of this topic. Because the facts of each situation may vary, this information may need to be supplemented by consulting legal advisors.

The box allows you to conduct a full text search or use the dropdown menu option to select a state.

STATES	TITLE
Alabama	<p>§ 36-25-1</p> <p>(8) Conflict of interest. A conflict on the part of a public official or public employee between his or her private interests and the official responsibilities inherent in an office of public trust. A conflict of interest involves any action, inaction, or decision by a public official or public employee in the discharge of his or her official duties which would materially affect his or her financial interest or those of his or her family members or any business with which the person is associated in a manner different from the manner it affects the other members of the class to which he or she belongs. A conflict of interest shall not include any of the following:</p> <p>a. A loan or financial transaction made or conducted in the ordinary course of business.</p> <p>b. An occasional nonpecuniary award publicly presented by an organization for performance of public service.</p> <p>c. Payment of or reimbursement for actual and necessary expenditures for travel and subsistence for the personal attendance of a public official or public employee at a convention or other meeting at which he or she is scheduled to meaningfully participate in connection with his or her official duties and for which attendance no reimbursement is made by the state.</p> <p>d. Any campaign contribution, including the purchase of tickets to, or advertisements in journals, for political or testimonial dinners, if the contribution is actually used for political purposes and is not given under circumstances from which it could reasonably be inferred that the purpose of the contribution is to substantially influence a public official in the performance of his or her official duties.</p>
	<p>§ 36-25-5</p> <p>(f) A conflict of interest shall exist when a member of a legislative body, public official, or public employee has a substantial financial interest by reason of ownership of, control of, or the exercise of power over any interest greater than five percent of the value of any corporation, company, association, or firm, partnership, proprietorship, or any other business entity of any kind or character which is uniquely affected by proposed or pending legislation; or who is an officer or director for any such corporation, company, association, or firm, partnership, proprietorship, or any other business entity of any kind or character which is uniquely affected by proposed or pending legislation.</p>
Alaska	<p>§ 24.60.030</p> <p>Prohibitions related to conflicts of interest and unethical conduct.</p> <p>(a) A legislator or legislative employee may not</p> <p>(1) solicit, agree to accept, or accept a benefit other than official compensation for the performance of public duties; this paragraph may not be construed to prohibit lawful solicitation for and acceptance of campaign contributions or the acceptance of a lawful gratuity under AS 24.60.080;</p>

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	<p>(2) use public funds, facilities, equipment, services, or another government asset or resource for a nonlegislative purpose, for involvement in or support of or opposition to partisan political activity, or for the private benefit of either the legislator, legislative employee, or another person; this paragraph does not prohibit</p> <p>(A) limited use of state property and resources for personal purposes if the use does not interfere with the performance of public duties and either the cost or value related to the use is nominal or the legislator or legislative employee reimburses the state for the cost of the use;</p> <p>(B) the use of mailing lists, computer data, or other information lawfully obtained from a government agency and available to the general public for nonlegislative purposes;</p> <p>(C) telephone or facsimile use that does not carry a special charge;</p> <p>(D) the legislative council, notwithstanding AS 24.05.190 , from designating a public facility for use by legislators and legislative employees for health or fitness purposes; when the council designates a facility to be used by legislators and legislative employees for health or fitness purposes, it shall adopt guidelines governing access to and use of the facility; the guidelines may establish times in which use of the facility is limited to specific groups; or</p> <p>(E) a legislator from using the legislator's private office in the capital city during a legislative session, and for the five days immediately before and the five days immediately after a legislative session, for nonlegislative purposes if the use does not interfere with the performance of public duties and if there is no cost to the state for the use of the space and equipment, other than utility costs and minimal wear and tear, or the legislator promptly reimburses the state for the cost; an office is considered a legislator's private office under this subparagraph if it is the primary space in the capital city reserved for use by the legislator, whether or not it is shared with others;</p> <p>(3) knowingly seek, accept, use, allocate, grant, or award public funds for a purpose other than that approved by law, or make a false statement in connection with a claim, request, or application for compensation, reimbursement, or travel allowances from public funds;</p> <p>(4) require a legislative employee to perform services for the private benefit of the legislator or employee at any time, or allow a legislative employee to perform services for the private benefit of a legislator or employee on government time; it is not a violation of this paragraph if the services were performed in an unusual or infrequent situation and the person's services were reasonably necessary to permit the legislator or legislative employee to perform official duties;</p> <p>(5) use or authorize the use of state funds, facilities, equipment, services, or another government asset or resource for the purpose of political fund raising or campaigning; this paragraph does not prohibit</p> <p>(A) limited use of state property and resources for personal purposes if the use does not interfere with the performance of public duties and either the cost or value related to the use is nominal or the legislator or legislative employee reimburses the state for the cost of the use;</p> <p>(B) the use of mailing lists, computer data, or other information lawfully obtained from a government agency and available to the general public for nonlegislative purposes;</p> <p>(C) telephone or facsimile use that does not carry a special charge;</p> <p>(D) storing or maintaining, consistent with (b) of this section, election campaign records in a legislator's office; or</p> <p>(E) a legislator from using the legislator's private office in the capital city during a legislative session, and for the five days immediately before and the five days immediately after a legislative session, for nonlegislative purposes if the use does not interfere with the performance of public duties and if there is no cost to the state for the use of the space and equipment, other than utility costs and minimal wear and tear, or the legislator promptly reimburses the state for the cost; an office is considered a legislator's private office under this subparagraph if it is the primary space in the capital city reserved for use by the legislator, whether or not it is shared with others.</p> <p>(b) A legislative employee may not on government time assist in political party or candidate activities, campaigning, or fund raising. A legislator may not require an employee to perform an act in violation of this subsection.</p> <p>(f) A legislative employee may not serve in a position that requires confirmation by the legislature. A legislator or legislative employee may serve on a board of an organization, including a governmental entity, that regularly has a substantial interest in the legislative activities of the legislator or employee if the legislator or employee discloses the board membership to the committee. A legislator or legislative employee who is required to make a disclosure under this subsection shall file the disclosure with the committee by the deadlines set out in AS 24.60.105 stating the name of each organization on whose board the person serves. The committee shall maintain a public record of the disclosure and forward the disclosure to the appropriate house for inclusion in the journal. This subsection does not require a legislator or legislative employee who is appointed to a board by the presiding officer to make a disclosure of the appointment to the committee if the appointment has been published in the appropriate legislative journal during the calendar year.</p> <p>(g) Unless required by the Uniform Rules of the Alaska State Legislature, a legislator may not</p>



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	<p>vote on a question if the legislator has an equity or ownership interest in a business, investment, real property, lease, or other enterprise if the interest is substantial and the effect on that interest of the action to be voted on is greater than the effect on a substantial class of persons to which the legislator belongs as a member of a profession, occupation, industry, or region...</p>
Arizona	<p>§ 38-503</p> <p>A. Any public officer or employee of a public agency who has, or whose relative has, a substantial interest in any contract, sale, purchase or service to such public agency shall make known that interest in the official records of such public agency and shall refrain from voting upon or otherwise participating in any manner as an officer or employee in such contract, sale or purchase.</p> <p>B. Any public officer or employee who has, or whose relative has, a substantial interest in any decision of a public agency shall make known such interest in the official records of such public agency and shall refrain from participating in any manner as an officer or employee in such decision.</p> <p>C. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections A and B of this section, no public officer or employee of a public agency shall supply to such public agency any equipment, material, supplies or services, unless pursuant to an award or contract let after public competitive bidding, except that: 1. A school district governing board may purchase, as provided in sections 15-213 and 15-323, supplies, materials and equipment from a school board member. 2. Political subdivisions other than school districts may purchase through their governing bodies, without using public competitive bidding procedures, supplies, materials and equipment not exceeding three hundred dollars in cost in any single transaction, not to exceed a total of one thousand dollars annually, from a member of the governing body if the policy for such purchases is approved annually.</p> <p>D. Notwithstanding subsections A and B of this section and as provided in sections 15-421 and 15-1441, the governing board of a school district or a community college district may not employ a person who is a member of the governing board or who is the spouse of a member of the governing board.</p>
	<p>§ 38-502</p> <p>3. "Make known" means the filing of a paper which is signed by a public officer or employee and which fully discloses a substantial interest or the filing of a copy of the official minutes of a public agency which fully discloses a substantial interest. The filing shall be in the special file established pursuant to section 38-509.</p> <p>10. "Remote interest" means:</p> <p>(a) That of a nonsalaried officer of a nonprofit corporation.</p> <p>(b) That of a landlord or tenant of the contracting party.</p> <p>(c) That of an attorney of a contracting party.</p> <p>(d) That of a member of a nonprofit cooperative marketing association.</p> <p>(e) The ownership of less than three per cent of the shares of a corporation for profit, provided the total annual income from dividends, including the value of stock dividends, from the corporation does not exceed five per cent of the total annual income of such officer or employee and any other payments made to him by the corporation do not exceed five per cent of his total annual income.</p> <p>(f) That of a public officer or employee in being reimbursed for his actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of official duty.</p> <p>(g) That of a recipient of public services generally provided by the incorporated city or town, political subdivision or state department, commission, agency, body or board of which he is a public officer or employee, on the same terms and conditions as if he were not an officer or employee.</p> <p>(h) That of a public school board member when the relative involved is not a dependent, as defined in section 43-1001, or a spouse.</p> <p>(i) That of a public officer or employee, or that of a relative of a public officer or employee, unless the contract or decision involved would confer a direct economic benefit or detriment upon the officer, employee or his relative, of any of the following:</p> <p>(i) Another political subdivision.</p> <p>(ii) A public agency of another political subdivision.</p> <p>(iii) A public agency except if it is the same governmental entity.</p> <p>(j) That of a member of a trade, business, occupation, profession or class of persons consisting of at least ten members which is no greater than the interest of the other members of that trade, business, occupation, profession or class of persons.</p> <p>11. "Substantial interest" means any pecuniary or proprietary interest, either direct or indirect, other than a remote interest.</p>
	House Rule 35 (E)(2) & Senate Rule 30 (E)(2)

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	<p>A personal financial interest exists if it is reasonably foreseeable that an action in the discharge of his official duties will have a material financial benefit or detriment either directly or indirectly on the member, his spouse or any minor child of whom he has legal custody, except that no personal financial interest exists if the legislator or such member of his household is a member of a class of persons and it reasonably appears that a majority of the total membership of that class is to be affected by such action.</p>
Arkansas	<p>§ 21-8-803</p> <p>(a) A legislator who is required to take an action in the discharge of his or her official duties that may affect his or her financial interest or cause financial benefit or detriment to him, or a business in which he or she is an officer, director, stockholder owning more than ten percent (10%) of the stock of the company, owner, trustee, partner, or employee, which is distinguishable from the effects of the action on the public generally or a broad segment of the public, shall:</p> <p>(1) Prepare a written statement describing the matter requiring action and stating the potential conflict; and (2) (A) Deliver a copy of the statement to the appropriate official to be filed with the statement of financial interest. (B) The copy of the statement may be delivered in person by the public official, by mail, or by a person authorized by the public official to deliver the copy.</p> <p>(b) The obligation to report a potential conflict of interest under this section arises as soon as the legislator is aware of the conflict.(c) If the statement of financial interest filed by the legislator makes the conflict readily apparent, then no report need be filed.</p>
California	<p>Joint Rule 44</p> <p>A person subject to this rule (recusal) has an interest that is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his or her duties in the public interest and of his or her responsibilities as prescribed by the laws of this state, or a personal interest, arising from any situation, within the scope of this rule, if he or she has reason to believe or expect that he or she will derive a direct monetary gain or suffer a direct monetary loss, as the case may be, by reason of his or her official activity. He or she does not have an interest that is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his or her duties in the public interest and of his or her responsibilities as prescribed by the laws of this state, or a personal interest, arising from any situation, within the scope of this rule, if any benefit or detriment accrues to him or her as a member of a business, profession, occupation, or group to no greater extent than any other member of the business, profession, occupation, or group....</p>
	<p>GOVERNMENT CODE; Title 9. Political Reform; Chapter 7. Conflicts of Interest; Article 1. General Prohibition</p> <p>§ 87100. Prohibition because of financial interest.</p> <p>No public official at any level of state or local government shall make, participate in making or in any way attempt to use his official position to influence a governmental decision in which he knows or has reason to know he has a financial interest.</p>
	<p>GOVERNMENT CODE; Title 9. Political Reform; Chapter 7. Conflicts of Interest; Article 1. General Prohibition</p> <p>§ 87101. Exception when participation in decision required.</p> <p>Section 87100 does not prevent any public official from making or participating in the making of a governmental decision to the extent his participation is legally required for the action or decision to be made. The fact that an official's vote is needed to break a tie does not make his participation legally required for purposes of this section.</p>
	<p>GOVERNMENT CODE; Title 9. Political Reform; Chapter 7. Conflicts of Interest; Article 1. General Prohibition</p> <p>§ 87102.5. Application of remedies of Fair Political Practices Act.</p> <p>(a) The remedies provided in Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 83100) shall apply to any Member of the Legislature who makes, participates in making, or in any way attempts to use his or her official position to influence any of the following governmental decisions in which he or she knows or has reason to know that he or she has a financial interest:</p> <p>(1) Any state governmental decision, other than any action or decision before the Legislature, made in the course of his or her duties as a member.</p> <p>(2) Approval, modification, or cancellation of any contract to which either house or a committee of the Legislature is a party.</p> <p>(3) Introduction as a lead author of any legislation that the member knows or has reason to know is nongeneral legislation.</p> <p>(4) Any vote in a legislative committee or subcommittee on what the member knows or has reason to know is nongeneral legislation.</p> <p>(5) Any rollcall vote on the Senate or Assembly floor on an item which the member knows is nongeneral legislation.</p> <p>(6) Any action or decision before the Legislature in which all of the following occur:</p>

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	<p>(A) The member has received any salary, wages, commissions, or similar earned income within the preceding 12 months from a lobbyist employer.</p> <p>(B) The member knows or has reason to know the action or decision will have a direct and significant financial impact on the lobbyist employer.</p> <p>(C) The action or decision will not have an impact on the public generally or a significant segment of the public in a similar manner.</p> <p>(7) Any action or decision before the Legislature on legislation that the member knows or has reason to know will have a direct and significant financial impact on any person, distinguishable from its impact on the public generally or a significant segment of the public, from whom the member has received any compensation within the preceding 12 months for the purpose of appearing, agreeing to appear, or taking any other action on behalf of that person, before any local board or agency.</p> <p>(b) For purposes of this section, all of the following apply:</p> <p>(1) "Any action or decision before the Legislature" means any vote in a committee or subcommittee, or any rollcall vote on the floor of the Senate or Assembly.</p> <p>(2) "Financial interest" means an interest as defined in Section 87103.</p> <p>(3) "Legislation" means a bill, resolution, or constitutional amendment.</p> <p>(4) "Nongeneral legislation" means legislation that is described in Section 87102.6 and is not of a general nature pursuant to Section 16 of Article IV of the Constitution.</p> <p>(5) A Member of the Legislature has reason to know that an action or decision will have a direct and significant financial impact on a person with respect to which disqualification may be required pursuant to subdivision (a) if either of the following apply:</p> <p>(A) With the knowledge of the member, the person has attempted to influence the vote of the member with respect to the action or decision.</p> <p>(B) Facts have been brought to the member's personal attention indicating that the action or decision will have a direct and significant impact on the person.</p> <p>(6) The prohibitions specified in subdivision (a) do not apply to a vote on the Budget Bill as a whole, or to a vote on a consent calendar, a motion for reconsideration, a waiver of any legislative rule, or any purely procedural matter.</p> <p>(7) A Member of the Legislature has reason to know that legislation is nongeneral legislation if facts have been brought to his or her personal attention indicating that it is nongeneral legislation.</p> <p>(8) Written advice given to a Member of the Legislature regarding his or her duties under this section by the Legislative Counsel shall have the same effect as advice given by the commission pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 83114 if both of the following apply:</p> <p>(A) The member has made the same written request based on the same material facts to the commission for advice pursuant to Section 83114 as to his or her duties under this section, as the written request and facts presented to the Legislative Counsel.</p> <p>(B) The commission has not provided written advice pursuant to the member's request prior to the time the member acts in good faith reliance on the advice of the Legislative Counsel.</p>
	<p>GOVERNMENT CODE; Title 9. Political Reform; Chapter 7. Conflicts of Interest; Article 1. General Prohibition</p> <p>§ 87102.6. "Nongeneral legislation".</p> <p>(a) "Nongeneral legislation" means legislation as to which both of the following apply:</p> <p>(1) It is reasonably foreseeable that the legislation will have direct and significant financial impact on one or more identifiable persons, or one or more identifiable pieces of real property.</p> <p>(2) It is not reasonably foreseeable that the legislation will have a similar impact on the public generally or on a significant segment of the public.</p> <p>(b) For purposes of this section and Section 87102.5, all of the following apply:</p> <p>(1) "Legislation" means a bill, resolution, or constitutional amendment.</p> <p>(2) "Public generally" includes an industry, trade, or profession.</p> <p>(3) Any recognized subgroup or specialty of the industry, trade, or profession constitutes a significant segment of the public.</p> <p>(4) A legislative district, county, city, or special district constitutes a significant segment of the public.</p> <p>(5) More than a small number of persons or pieces of real property is a significant segment of the public.</p> <p>(6) Legislation, administrative action, or other governmental action impacts in a similar manner all members of the public, or all members of a significant segment of the public, on which it has a direct financial effect, whether or not the financial effect on individual members of the public or the significant segment of the public is the same as the impact on the other members of the public or the significant segment of the public.</p> <p>(7) The Budget Bill as a whole is not nongeneral legislation.</p> <p>(8) Legislation that contains at least one provision that constitutes nongeneral legislation is</p>

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	nongeneral legislation, even if the legislation also contains other provisions that are general and do not constitute nongeneral legislation.
	<p>GOVERNMENT CODE; Title 9. Political Reform; Chapter 7. Conflicts of Interest; Article 1. General Prohibition § 87102.8. Use of official position to influence governmental decision in which official has financial interest.</p> <p>(a) No elected state officer, as defined in subdivision (f) of Section 14 of Article v. of the California Constitution, shall make or participate in the making of, or use his or her official position to influence, any governmental decision before the agency in which the elected state officer serves, where he or she knows or has reason to know that he or she has a financial interest.</p> <p>(b) An elected state officer knows or has reason to know that he or she has a financial interest in any action by, or a decision before the agency in which he or she serves where either of the following occur:</p> <p>(1) The action or decision will have a direct and significant financial impact on a lobbyist employer from which the officer has received any salary, wages, commissions, or similar earned income within the preceding 12 months and the action or decision will not have an impact on the public generally or a significant segment of the public in a similar manner.</p> <p>(2) The action or decision will have a direct and significant financial impact on any person, distinguishable from its impact on the public generally or a significant segment of the public, from whom the officer has received any compensation within the preceding 12 months for the purpose of appearing, agreeing to appear, or taking any other action on behalf of that person, before any local board or agency.</p> <p>(c) The definitions of "public generally" and "significant segment of the public" contained in Section 87102.6 shall apply to this section.</p> <p>(d) Notwithstanding Section 87102, the remedies provided in Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 83100) shall apply to violations of this section.</p>
	<p>GOVERNMENT CODE; Title 9. Political Reform; Chapter 7. Conflicts of Interest, Article 1. General Prohibition § 87103. Financial interest.</p> <p>A public official has a financial interest in a decision within the meaning of Section 87100 if it is reasonably foreseeable that the decision will have a material financial effect, distinguishable from its effect on the public generally, on the official, a member of his or her immediate family, or on any of the following:</p> <p>(a) Any business entity in which the public official has a direct or indirect investment worth two thousand dollars (\$2,000) or more.</p> <p>(b) Any real property in which the public official has a direct or indirect interest worth two thousand dollars (\$2,000) or more.</p> <p>(c) Any source of income, except gifts or loans by a commercial lending institution made in the regular course of business on terms available to the public without regard to official status, aggregating five hundred dollars (\$500) or more in value provided or promised to, received by, the public official within 12 months prior to the time when the decision is made.</p> <p>(d) Any business entity in which the public official is a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee, or holds any position of management.</p> <p>(e) Any donor of, or any intermediary or agent for a donor of, a gift or gifts aggregating two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) or more in value provided to, received by, or promised to the public official within 12 months prior to the time when the decision is made. The amount of the value of gifts specified by this subdivision shall be adjusted biennially by the commission to equal the same amount determined by the commission pursuant to subdivision (f) of Section 89503.</p> <p>For purposes of this section, indirect investment or interest means any investment or interest owned by the spouse or dependent child of a public official, by an agent on behalf of a public official, or by a business entity or trust in which the official, the official's agents, spouse, and dependent children own directly, indirectly, or beneficially a 10-percent interest or greater.</p>
Colorado	<p>Colo. Const. Art. 5, § 43</p> <p>A member who has a personal or private interest in any measure or bill proposed or pending before the general assembly, shall disclose the fact to the house of which he is a member, and shall not vote thereon.</p>
	<p>House Rule 21</p> <p>"A member who has an immediate personal or financial interest in any bill or measure proposed or pending before the General Assembly shall disclose the fact to the House, and shall not vote upon such bill or measure."</p>

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	<p>Senate Rule 17</p> <p>"Any Senator having a personal or private interest in any question or bill pending, shall disclosure such fact to the Senate and shall not vote thereon, and if the vote be by ayes or noes, such fact shall be entered in the journal."</p> <p>Senate Rule 41</p> <p>(b) Conflicts of interest - personal or private interests versus public interest - definition.</p> <p>(1) Subject to article V, section 43, of the state constitution, a Senator has the right to vote upon all questions before the Senate and to participate in the business of the Senate and its committees, and, in so doing, is presumed to act in good faith and in the public interest. When a personal interest conflicts with the public interest and tends to affect the Senator's independence of judgment, legislative activities are subject to limitations. Where any such conflict exists, it disqualifies the Senator from voting upon any question and from attempting to influence any legislation to which it relates.</p> <p>(2) A question arises as to whether a personal or private interest tends to affect a Senator's independence of judgment if the Senator:</p> <p>(A) Has or acquires a substantial economic interest by reason of the Senator's personal situation, distinct from that held generally by members of the same occupation, profession, or business, in a measure proposed or pending before the General Assembly; or has a close relative or close economic associate with such an interest.</p> <p>(B) Has or acquires a financial interest in an enterprise, direct or indirect, which enterprise or interest would be affected by proposed legislation differently from like enterprises.</p> <p>(C) Has or acquires a close economic association with, or is a close relative of, a person who has a financial interest in an enterprise, direct or indirect, which enterprise or interest would be affected by proposed legislation differently from like enterprises.</p> <p>(D) Has or acquires a close economic association with, or is a close relative of, a person who is a lobbyist or who employs or has employed a lobbyist to propose legislation or to influence proposed legislation on which the Senator has or may be expected to vote.</p> <p>(E) Accepts a gift, loan, service, or economic opportunity of significant value from a person who would be affected by or who has an interest in an enterprise which would be affected by proposed legislation. This provision shall likewise apply where such gift, loan, service, or opportunity is accepted by a close relative of the Senator. It shall not normally apply in the following cases: A commercially reasonable loan made in the ordinary course of business by an institution authorized by the laws of this state to engage in the business of making loans; an occasional nonpecuniary gift, insignificant in value; a nonpecuniary award publicly presented by a nonprofit organization in recognition of public service; or payment of or reimbursement for actual and necessary expenditures for travel and subsistence for personal attendance at a convention or other meeting at which the Senator is scheduled to participate and for which attendance no reimbursement is made by the state of Colorado.</p>
Connecticut	<p>TITLE 1 PROVISIONS OF GENERAL APPLICATION ; CHAPTER 10 CODES OF ETHICS; PART I CODE OF ETHICS FOR PUBLIC OFFICIALS</p> <p>§ 1-85. (Formerly Sec. 1-68). Interest in conflict with discharge of duties.</p> <p>A public official, including an elected state official, or state employee has an interest which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his duties or employment in the public interest and of his responsibilities as prescribed in the laws of this state, if he has reason to believe or expect that he, his spouse, a dependent child, or a business with which he is associated will derive a direct monetary gain or suffer a direct monetary loss, as the case may be, by reason of his official activity. A public official, including an elected state official, or state employee does not have an interest which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his duties in the public interest and of his responsibilities as prescribed by the laws of this state, if any benefit or detriment accrues to him, his spouse, a dependent child, or a business with which he, his spouse or such dependent child is associated as a member of a profession, occupation or group to no greater extent than any other member of such profession, occupation or group. A public official, including an elected state official or state employee who has a substantial conflict may not take official action on the matter.</p>
Delaware	<p>TITLE 29. STATE GOVERNMENT; PART II. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY; CHAPTER 10. LEGISLATIVE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST</p> <p>§ 1002. Restrictions relating to personal or private interest.</p> <p>(a) A legislator who has a personal or private interest in any measure or bill pending in the General Assembly shall disclose the fact to the House of which he or she is a member and shall not participate in the debate nor vote thereon; provided, that upon the request of any other member of the House or Senate, as the case may be, a legislator who has such a personal or private interest may nevertheless respond to questions concerning any such measure or bill. A personal or private interest in a measure or bill is an interest which tends to impair a legislator's independence of judgment in the performance of his or her legislative duties with respect to that measure or bill.</p>

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	<p>(b) A legislator has an interest which tends to impair his or her independence of judgment in the performance of his or her legislative duties with regard to any bill or measure when:</p> <p>(1) The enactment or defeat of the measure or bill would result in a financial benefit or detriment to accrue to the legislator or a close relative to a greater extent than such benefit or detriment would accrue to others who are members of the same class or group of persons; or</p> <p>(2) The legislator or a close relative has a financial interest in a private enterprise which enterprise or interest would be affected by a measure or bill to a lesser or greater extent than like enterprises or other interests in the same enterprise; or</p> <p>(3) A person required to register as a legislative agent pursuant to Chapter 16 of this title is a close relative of the legislator and that person acts to promote, advocate, influence or oppose the measure or bill.</p> <p>(c) Disclosure required under subsection (a) of this section shall be made in open session:</p> <p>(1) Prior to the vote on the measure or bill by any committee of which the legislator is a member; and</p> <p>(2) Prior to the vote on the measure or bill in the House of which the legislator is a member.</p> <p>(d) A legislator who violates the provisions of this section shall be subject to such sanction as shall be prescribed by the House of which he or she is a member pursuant to rules adopted under article II, § 9 of the Delaware Constitution.</p>
District of Columbia	<p>TITLE 1. GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION; CHAPTER 11. ELECTION CAMPAIGNS; LOBBYING; CONFLICT OF INTEREST; SUBCHAPTER I. GENERAL PROVISIONS; PART F. CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND DISCLOSURE</p> <p>§ 1-1106.01. Conflict of interest [Formerly § 1-1461].</p> <p>(a) The Congress declares that elective and public office is a public trust, and any effort to realize personal gain through official conduct is a violation of that trust.</p> <p>(b) No public official shall use his or her official position or office to obtain financial gain for himself or herself, any member of his or her household, or any business with which he or she or a member of his or her household is associated, other than that compensation provided by law for said public official. This subsection shall not affect a vote by a public official: (1) On any matter which affects a class of persons (such a class shall include no less than 50 persons) of which such public official is a member if the financial gain to be realized is de minimis; (2) on any matter relating to such public official's compensation as authorized by law; or (3) regarding any elections law. If an action is taken by any department, agency, board, or commission of the District of Columbia, except by the Council of the District of Columbia, in violation of this section, such action may be set aside and declared void and of no effect, upon a proper order of a court of competent jurisdiction.</p> <p>(c) No person shall offer or give to a public official or a member of a public official's household, and no public official shall solicit or receive anything of value, including a gift, favor, service, loan gratuity, discount, hospitality, political contribution, or promise of future employment, based on any understanding that such public official's official actions or judgment or vote would be influenced thereby, or where it could reasonably be inferred that the thing of value would influence the public official in the discharge of his or her duties, or as a reward, except for political contributions publicly reported pursuant to § 1-1102.06 and transactions made in the ordinary course of business of the person offering or giving the thing of value.</p> <p>(d) No person shall offer or pay to a public official, and no public official shall solicit or receive any money, in addition to that lawfully received by the public official in his or her official capacity, for advice or assistance given in the course of the public official's employment or relating to his or her employment.</p> <p>(e) No public official shall use or disclose confidential information given in the course of or by reason of his or her official position or activities in any way that could result in financial gain for himself or herself or for any other person.</p> <p>(f) No member or employee of the Council of the District of Columbia or Board of Education of the District of Columbia shall accept assignment to serve on a committee the jurisdiction of which consists of matters (other than of a de minimis nature) in which he or she or a member of his or her family or a business with which he or she is associated, has financial interest.</p> <p>(g) Any public official who, in the discharge of his or her official duties, would be required to take an action or make a decision that would affect directly or indirectly his or her financial interests or those of a member of his or her household, or a business with which he or she is associated, or must take an official action on a matter as to which he or she has a conflict situation created by a personal, family, or client interest, shall:</p> <p>(1) Prepare a written statement describing the matter requiring action or decision, and the nature of his or her potential conflict of interest with respect to such action or decision;</p> <p>(2) Cause copies of such statement to be delivered to the District of Columbia Board of</p>

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	<p>Elections and Ethics (referred to in this subchapter as the "Board"), and to his or her immediate superior, if any;</p> <p>(3) If he or she is a member of the Council of the District of Columbia or member of the Board of Education of the District of Columbia, or employee of either, deliver a copy of such statement to the Chairman thereof, who shall cause such statement to be printed in the record of proceedings, and, upon request of said member or employee, shall excuse the member from votes, deliberations, and other action on the matter on which a potential conflict exists;</p> <p>(4) If he or she is not the Mayor or a member of the Council of the District of Columbia, his or her superior, if any, shall assign the matter to another employee who does not have a potential conflict of interest, or, if he or she has no immediate superior, except the Mayor, he or she shall take such steps as the Board prescribes through rules and regulations to remove himself or herself from influence over actions and decisions on the matter on which potential conflict exists; and</p> <p>(5) During a period when a charge of conflict of interest is under investigation by the Board, if he or she is not the Mayor or a member of the Council of the District of Columbia or a member of the Board of Education, his or her superior, except the Mayor, if any, shall have the arbitrary power to assign the matter to another employee who does not have a potential conflict of interest, or if he or she has no immediate superior, he or she shall take such steps as the Board shall prescribe through rules and regulations to remove himself or herself from influence over actions and decisions on the matter on which there is a conflict of interest.</p> <p>(h) Neither the Mayor nor any member of the Council of the District of Columbia may represent another person before any regulatory agency or court of the District of Columbia while serving in such office. The preceding sentence does not apply to an appearance by such an official before any such agency or court in his or her official capacity or to the appearance by a member of the Council (not the Chairman) licensed to practice law in the District of Columbia, before any court or non-District of Columbia regulatory agency in any matter which does not affect his or her official position.</p> <p>(h-1)</p> <p>(1) No member of a board or commission shall be eligible for appointment by the members of that board or commission to any paid office or position under the supervision of that board or commission.</p> <p>(2) No former member of a board or commission shall be eligible for appointment to any paid office or position under the supervision of the board or commission on which he or she served, unless</p> <p>(A) At least 45 days have passed since the date of termination of his or her service as a member of the board or commission; and</p> <p>(B) He or she has followed the same employment application requirements required of other applicants for the paid office or position.</p> <p>(i) As used in this section, the term:</p> <p>(1) "Public official" means any person required to file a financial statement under § 1-1106.02.</p> <p>(2) "Business" means any corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, firm, enterprise, franchise, association, organization, self-employed individual, holding company, joint stock, trust, and any legal entity through which business is conducted for profit.</p> <p>(3) "Business with which he or she is associated" means any business of which the person or member of his or her household is a director, officer, owner, employee, or holder of stock worth \$ 1,000 or more at fair market value, and any business which is a client of that person.</p> <p>(4) "Household" means the public official and his or her immediate family.</p> <p>(5) "Immediate family" means the public official's spouse and any parent, brother, or sister, or child of the public official, and the spouse of any such parent, brother, sister, or child.</p>
Florida	<p>§ 112.3143. Voting conflicts.</p> <p>...</p> <p>(2) No state public officer is prohibited from voting in an official capacity on any matter. However, any state public officer voting in an official capacity upon any measure which would inure to the officer's special private gain or loss; which he or she knows would inure to the special private gain or loss of any principal by whom the officer is retained or to the parent organization or subsidiary of a corporate principal by which the officer is retained; or which the officer knows would inure to the special private gain or loss of a relative or business associate of the public officer shall, within 15 days after the vote occurs, disclose the nature of his or her interest as a public record in a memorandum filed with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who shall incorporate the memorandum in the minutes.</p>
	<p>§ 112.312. Definitions.</p> <p>...</p> <p>(8) Conflict or conflict of interest means a situation in which regard for a private interest tends to lead to disregard of a public duty or interest.</p>

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Georgia	<p>§ 45-10-3. Code of ethics for members of boards, commissions, and authorities -- Establishment and text.</p> <p>Notwithstanding any provisions of law to the contrary, each member of all boards, commissions, and authorities created by general statute shall:</p> <p>...</p> <p>(9) Never take any official action with regard to any matter under circumstances in which he knows or should know that he has a direct or indirect monetary interest in the subject matter of such matter or in the outcome of such official action.</p>
	<p>§ 45-10-90. Definitions. As used in this part, the term:</p> <p>(1) "Abuse of official power" means threatening to use the powers or personnel of a state entity for personal purposes of coercion, retaliation, or punishment.</p> <p>(4) "Conflict of interest" means an individual has multiple interests and uses his or her official position to exploit, in some way, his or her position for his or her own direct, unique, pecuniary, and personal benefit.</p> <p>(6) "Improper conduct" means a member of the General Assembly:</p> <p>(A) Engages in conduct that is a conflict of interest;</p> <p>(B) Engages in conduct that is an abuse of official power; or</p> <p>(C) Illegally uses an employee in a political campaign</p>
	<p>House Rule 133</p> <p>Members are expected to abstain from voting if they are "immediately and particularly interested."</p>
	<p>Senate Rule 1-4.1</p> <p>(d) No Senator shall vote upon any question if the Senator or any member of the Senator's immediate family has a direct pecuniary interest in the result of such vote which interest is distinct, unique or peculiar to the Senator or the Senator's immediate family.</p> <p>Senate Rule 1-4.3</p> <p>(a) Senators and staff shall avoid financial conflicts of interest and close economic associations where official action or decisions are motivated not by public duty but by economic self-interest or association. "Financial conflicts of interest and close economic associations" are defined as those financial interests or interests arising from close economic associations with other persons or entities which are so material, direct, distinct, unique, and peculiar to the Senator or staff that it might reasonably be expected that impartial official judgment could not be exercised.</p>
Guam	<p>TITLE 4. PUBLIC OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES; CHAPTER 15. STANDARD OF CONDUCT FOR ELECTED OFFICERS, APPOINTED OFFICERS, AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF GUAM; ARTICLE 2. SPECIFIED STANDARDS</p> <p>§ 15205. Conflicts of Interest.</p> <p>(a) No employee shall take any official action directly affecting:</p> <p>(1) business or other undertaking in which the employee has a financial interest; or</p> <p>(2) private undertaking in which the employee is engaged as legal counsel, advisor, consultant, representative, or other agency capacity. A department head who is unable to be disqualified on any matter described in item (1) or (2) of this Subsection may be in violation of this Subsection even if the individual has complied with the disclosure requirements of § 15208; and a person whose position on a board, commission or committee is mandated by statute, resolution or executive order to have particular qualifications shall only be prohibited from taking official action that directly and specifically affects a business or undertaking in which such person has a financial interest; provided that the financial interest is related to the member's particular qualifications.</p> <p>(b) No employee shall acquire financial interests in any business or other undertaking which the employee has reason to believe may be directly involved in official action to be taken by the employee.</p> <p>(c) No employee shall assist any person or business or act in a representative capacity before any territorial agency for any compensation in any transaction involving the Territory.</p> <p>(d) No employee shall assist any person or business or act in a representative capacity for a fee or other compensation to secure passage of a bill or to obtain a contract, claim, or other transaction or proposal in which the employee has participated or will participate as an employee, nor shall the employee assist any person, or business, or act in a representative capacity for a fee or other compensation on such bill, contract, claim, or other transaction or proposal before the Legislature or territorial agency of which the individual is an employee.</p>

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	<p>(e) No employee shall assist any person or business or act in a representative capacity before a territorial agency for a fee or other compensation, on any bill, contract, claim, or other transaction or proposal involving official action by the agency if the employee has official authority over that agency unless such employee has complied with the disclosure requirements of § 15208.</p> <p>(f) Nothing herein shall preclude an employee from having outside business interests or employment so long as such interests or employment do not interfere with performance of official duties and is not otherwise in direct conflict with this Chapter.</p>
Hawaii	<p>§ 84-14. Conflicts of interests.</p> <p>(a) No employee shall take any official action directly affecting:</p> <p>(1) A business or other undertaking in which he has a substantial financial interest; or(2) A private undertaking in which he is engaged as legal counsel, advisor, consultant, representative, or other agency capacity. A department head who is unable to disqualify himself on any matter described in items (1) and (2) above will not be in violation of this subsection if he has complied with the disclosure requirements of section 84-17; and a person whose position on a board, commission, or committee is mandated by statute, resolution, or executive order to have particular qualifications shall only be prohibited from taking official action that directly and specifically affects a business or undertaking in which he has a substantial financial interest; provided that the substantial financial interest is related to the member's particular qualifications.</p> <p>(b) No employee shall acquire financial interests in any business or other undertaking which he has reason to believe may be directly involved in official action to be taken by him.</p> <p>(c) No legislator or employee shall assist any person or business or act in a representative capacity before any State or county agency for a contingent compensation in any transaction involving the State.</p> <p>(d) No legislator or employee shall assist any person or business or act in a representative capacity for a fee or other compensation to secure passage of a bill or to obtain a contract, claim, or other transaction or proposal in which he has participated or will participate as a legislator or employee, nor shall he assist any person or business or act in a representative capacity for a fee or other compensation on such bill, contract, claim, or other transaction or proposal before the legislature or agency of which he is an employee or legislator.</p> <p>(e) No employee shall assist any person or business or act in a representative capacity before a state or county agency for a fee or other consideration on any bill, contract, claim, or other transaction or proposal involving official action by the agency if he has official authority over that state or county agency unless he has complied with the disclosure requirements of section 84-17.</p>
Idaho	<p>§ 59-703. Definitions.</p> <p>(4) "Conflict of interest" means any official action or any decision or recommendation by a person acting in a capacity as a public official, the effect of which would be to the private pecuniary benefit of the person or a member of the person's household, or a business with which the person or a member of the person's household is associated, unless the pecuniary benefit arises out of the following:</p> <p>(a) An interest or membership in a particular business, industry, occupation or class required by law as a prerequisite to the holding by the person of the office or position;</p> <p>(b) Any action in the person's official capacity which would affect to the same degree a class consisting of an industry or occupation group in which the person, or a member of the person's household or business with which the person is associated, is a member or is engaged;</p> <p>(c) Any interest which the person has by virtue of his profession, trade or occupation where his interest would be affected to the same degree as that of a substantial group or class of others similarly engaged in the profession, trade or occupation;</p> <p>(d) Any action by a public official upon any revenue measure, any appropriation measure or any measure imposing a tax, when similarly situated members of the general public are affected by the outcome of the action in a substantially similar manner and degree.</p> <p>5) "Economic gain" means increase in pecuniary value from sources other than lawful compensation as a public official.</p>
	<p>§ 59-704. Required action in conflicts.</p> <p>A public official shall not take any official action or make a formal decision or formal recommendation concerning any matter where he has a conflict of interest and has failed to disclose such conflict as provided in this section. Disclosure of a conflict does not affect an elected public official's authority to be counted for purposes of determining a quorum and to debate and to vote on the matter, unless the public official requests to be excused from debate and voting at his or her discretion. In order to determine whether a conflict of interest exists</p>

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	<p>relative to any matter within the scope of the official functions of a public official, a public official may seek legal advice from the attorney representing that governmental entity or from the attorney general or from independent counsel. If the legal advice is that no real or potential conflict of interest exists, the public official may proceed and shall not be subject to the prohibitions of this chapter. If the legal advice is that a real or potential conflict may exist, the public official:</p> <p>(1) If he is an elected legislative public official, he shall disclose the nature of the potential conflict of interest and/or be subject to the rules of the body of which he/she is a member and shall take all action required under such rules prior to acting on the matter. If a member requests to be excused from voting on an issue which involves a conflict or a potential conflict, and the body of which he is a member does not excuse him, such failure to excuse shall exempt that member from any civil or criminal liability related to that particular issue.</p> <p>(2) If he is an elected state public official, he shall prepare a written statement describing the matter required to be acted upon and the nature of the potential conflict, and shall file such statement with the secretary of state prior to acting on the matter. A public official may seek legal advice from the attorney representing that agency or from the attorney general or from independent counsel. The elected public official may then act on the advice of the agency's attorney, the attorney general or independent counsel.</p> <p>(3) If he is an appointed or employed state public official, he shall prepare a written statement describing the matter to be acted upon and the nature of the potential conflict, and shall deliver the statement to his appointing authority. The appointing authority may obtain an advisory opinion from the attorney general or from the attorney representing that agency. The public official may then act on the advice of the attorney general, the agency's attorney or independent counsel.</p> <p>(4) If he is an elected public official of a county or municipality, he shall disclose the nature of a potential conflict of interest prior to acting on a matter and shall be subject to the rules of the body of which he/she is a member and take all action required by the rules prior to acting on the matter. If a member requests to be excused from voting on an issue which involves a conflict or a potential conflict, and the body of which he is a member does not excuse him, such failure to excuse shall exempt that member from any civil or criminal liability related to that particular issue. The public official may obtain an advisory opinion from the attorney general or the attorney for the county or municipality or from independent counsel. The public official may then act on the advice of the attorney general or attorney for the county or municipality or his independent counsel.</p> <p>(5) If he is an appointed or employed public official of a county or municipality, he shall prepare a written statement describing the matter required to be acted upon and the nature of the potential conflict, and shall deliver the statement to his appointing authority. The appointing authority may obtain an advisory opinion from the attorney for the appointing authority, or, if none, the attorney general. The public official may then act on the advice of the attorney general or attorney for the appointing authority or independent counsel.</p> <p>(6) Nothing contained herein shall preclude the executive branch of state government or a political subdivision from establishing an ethics board or commission to perform the duties and responsibilities provided for in this chapter. Any ethics board or commission so established shall have specifically stated powers and duties including the power to:</p> <p>(a) Issue advisory opinions upon the request of a public official within its jurisdiction;</p> <p>(b) Investigate possible unethical conduct of public officials within its jurisdiction and conduct hearings, issue findings, and make recommendations for disciplinary action to a public official's appointing authority;</p> <p>(c) Accept complaints of unethical conduct from the public and take appropriate action.</p>
Illinois	<p>§ 5 ILCS 420/3-202. [Conflict situations; abstention]</p> <p>When a legislator must take official action on a legislative matter as to which he has a conflict situation created by a personal, family, or client legislative interest, he should consider the possibility of eliminating the interest creating the conflict situation. If that is not feasible, he should consider the possibility of abstaining from such official action. In making his decision as to abstention, the following factors should be considered;</p> <p>a. whether a substantial threat to his independence of judgment has been created by the conflict situation;</p> <p>b. the effect of his participation on public confidence in the integrity of the legislature;</p> <p>c. whether his participation is likely to have any significant effect on the disposition of the matter;</p> <p>d. the need for his particular contribution, such as special knowledge of the subject matter, to the effective functioning of the legislature.</p> <p>He need not abstain if he decides to participate in a manner contrary to the economic interest which creates the conflict situation.</p>

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	If he does abstain, he should disclose that fact to his respective legislative body.
	<p>§ 5 ILCS 420/3-203. [Public interest to prevail]</p> <p>When, despite the existence of a conflict situation, a legislator chooses to take official action on a matter, he should serve the public interest, and not the interest of any person.</p>
Indiana	<p>§ 35-44-1-3. Conflicts of interest -- Public servants.</p> <p>(a) A public servant who knowingly or intentionally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) has a pecuniary interest in; or (2) derives a profit from; <p>a contract or purchase connected with an action by the governmental entity served by the public servant commits conflict of interest, a Class D felony.</p> <p>(b) This section does not prohibit a public servant from receiving compensation for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) services provided as a public servant; or (2) expenses incurred by the public servant as provided by law. <p>(c) This section does not prohibit a public servant from having a pecuniary interest in or deriving a profit from a contract or purchase connected with the governmental entity served under any of the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) If the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (A) public servant is not a member or on the staff of the governing body empowered to contract or purchase on behalf of the governmental entity; (B) functions and duties performed by the public servant for the governmental entity are unrelated to the contract or purchase; and (C) public servant makes a disclosure under subsection (d)(1) through (d)(6). (2) If the contract or purchase involves utility services from a utility whose rate structure is regulated by the state or federal government. (3) If the public servant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (A) is an elected public servant or a member of the board of trustees of a state supported college or university; and (B) makes a disclosure under subsection (d)(1) through (d)(6). (4) If the public servant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (A) was appointed by an elected public servant or the board of trustees of a state supported college or university; and (B) makes a disclosure under subsection (d)(1) through (d)(7). (5) If the public servant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (A) acts in only an advisory capacity for a state supported college or university; and (B) does not have authority to act on behalf of the college or university in a matter involving a contract or purchase. (6) If the public servant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (A) is employed by the governing body of a school corporation and the contract or purchase involves the employment of a dependent or the payment of fees to a dependent; and (B) makes a disclosure under subsection (d)(1) through (d)(6). (7) If the public servant is under the jurisdiction of the state ethics commission as provided in IC 4-2-6-2.5 and obtains from the state ethics commission, following full and truthful disclosure, written approval that the public servant will not or does not have a conflict of interest in connection with the contract or purchase under IC 4-2-6 and this section. The approval required under this subdivision must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (A) granted to the public servant before action is taken in connection with the contract or purchase by the governmental entity served; or (B) sought by the public servant as soon after the contract or purchase as the public servant becomes aware of the facts that give rise to a question of conflict of interest. <p>(d) A disclosure required by this section must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) be in writing; (2) describe the contract or purchase to be made by the governmental entity; (3) describe the pecuniary interest that the public servant has in the contract or purchase; (4) be affirmed under penalty of perjury;

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	<p>(5) be submitted to the governmental entity and be accepted by the governmental entity in a public meeting of the governmental entity prior to final action on the contract or purchase;</p> <p>(6) be filed within fifteen (15) days after final action on the contract or purchase with: (A) the state board of accounts; and (B) if the governmental entity is a governmental entity other than the state or a state supported college or university, the clerk of the circuit court in the county where the governmental entity takes final action on the contract or purchase; and</p> <p>(7) contain, if the public servant is appointed, the written approval of the elected public servant (if any) or the board of trustees of a state supported college or university (if any) that appointed the public servant.</p> <p>(e) The state board of accounts shall forward to the state ethics commission a copy of all disclosures filed with the board under IC 16-22-2 through IC 16-22-5, IC 16-23-1, or this section.</p> <p>(f) The state ethics commission shall maintain an index of all disclosures received by the commission. The index must contain a listing of each public servant, setting forth the disclosures received by the commission made by that public servant.</p> <p>(g) A public servant has a pecuniary interest in a contract or purchase if the contract or purchase will result or is intended to result in an ascertainable increase in the income or net worth of:</p> <p>(1) the public servant; or</p> <p>(2) a dependent of the public servant who: (A) is under the direct or indirect administrative control of the public servant; or (B) receives a contract or purchase order that is reviewed, approved, or directly or indirectly administered by the public servant.</p> <p>(h) It is a defense in a prosecution under this section that the public servant's interest in the contract or purchase and all other contracts and purchases made by the governmental entity during the twelve (12) months before the date of the contract or purchase was two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) or less.</p> <p>(i) Notwithstanding subsection (d), a member of the board of trustees of a state supported college or university, or a person appointed by such a board of trustees, complies with the disclosure requirements of this chapter with respect to the member's or person's pecuniary interest in a particular type of contract or purchase which is made on a regular basis from a particular vendor if the member or person files with the state board of accounts and the board of trustees a statement of pecuniary interest in that particular type of contract or purchase made with that particular vendor. The statement required by this subsection must be made on an annual basis.</p> <p>(j) This section does not apply to members of the governing board of a hospital organized or operated under IC 16-22-1 through IC 16-22-5 or IC 16-23-1.</p> <p>(k) As used in this section, "dependent" means any of the following:</p> <p>(1) The spouse of a public servant.</p> <p>(2) A child, stepchild, or adoptee (as defined in IC 31-9-2-2) of a public servant who is: (A) unemancipated; and (B) less than eighteen (18) years of age.</p> <p>(3) Any individual more than one-half (1/2) of whose support is provided during a year by the public servant.</p>
	<p>Senate Rules 87-96</p> <p>VII. ETHICS.</p> <p>87. It is declared that high moral and ethical standards among State Senators are essential to the conduct of free government; that the Senate believes that a code of ethics for the guidance of State Senators will help them avoid conflicts of interest in public office, will improve standards of public service, and will promote and strengthen the faith and confidence of the people of Indiana. The code is intended to protect the individual Senators while providing guidelines for all members of the Senate. Recognizing that service in the Indiana General Assembly is a part-time endeavor and that members of the General Assembly are individuals who are active in the affairs of their localities and elsewhere and that it is necessary that they maintain a livelihood and source of income apart from their legislative compensation, the following guidelines are adopted to assist the members in the conduct of their legislative duties.</p> <p>88. A Senator who is offered:</p> <p>(1) an economic or investment opportunity; or</p> <p>(2) a loan, gratuity, discount, favor, hospitality, or other goods or services; by a person, shall consider, in determining whether or not to accept the offer, whether the Senator's acceptance of the offer may affect the Senator's independent legislative judgment. In so considering, the Senator shall take into account the following:</p>

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	<p>(A) whether the opportunity is being offered with the intent to influence the Senator's conduct in the performance of legislative duties; or(B) whether acceptance of the offer would have a unique, direct, and material effect on the nonlegislative income of the Senator, a member of the Senator's immediate family or those of a partnership, corporation or business in which the Senator holds a legal or equitable interest. Should the Senator determine that, by acceptance of the offer, the Senator's independent legislative judgment may be affected, the Senator shall refuse the offer.</p> <p>89. A Senator who has a direct personal or pecuniary interest in a piece of legislation which is so substantial as to affect the Senator's independent legislative judgment is not precluded from participating in committee and floor debate on the legislation, if the Senator publicly proclaims that interest.</p> <p>90. During the course of a legislative session, a Senator may be placed in a position where the Senator has the obligation to vote on legislation in which the Senator has a direct personal or pecuniary interest. In making this decision pursuant to Rule 4 of the Standing Rules of the Senate and Orders for Government relative to the Senator's activity on the legislation, the Senator shall consider the following:</p> <p>(1) Whether the Senator's interest in the legislation is so substantial as to affect the Senator's independence of judgment with respect to the legislation.(2) To what extent the Senator's interest in the legislation mirrors the interest of the citizenry to which the Senator is directly responsible.(3) The effect of the Senator's participation in the voting on the legislation on public confidence in the integrity of the legislature.(4) The need of the Senator's particular contribution, such as special knowledge of the subject matter, to the effective functioning of the legislature.(5) Whether the legislation would have a unique, direct, and material effect on the nonlegislative income of the Senator, a member of the Senator's immediate family or those of a partnership, corporation, or business in which the Senator holds a legal or equitable interest.</p> <p>91. A Senator may request the assistance of the Senate Legislative Ethics Committee (established pursuant to IC 2-2.1-3-5) in determining the propriety of the Senator's:</p> <p>(1) proposed acceptance of an offer;</p> <p>(2) participation in upcoming debate; or</p> <p>(3) participation in an upcoming vote.</p> <p>92. Under Rule 91, the Senator shall:</p> <p>(1) Prepare a written statement describing the matter requiring action or decision by the Senator and the nature of the Senator's potential conflict of interest; and</p> <p>(2) Deliver a copy of the statement to the Chairman of the Senate Legislative Ethics Committee. If the Chairman is unavailable, a copy of the statement may be delivered to the President Pro Tempore.</p> <p>93. If a Senator requests the assistance of the Senate Legislative Ethics Committee under Rule 91, and there is insufficient time to comply with Rule 92, the Senator shall orally inform the Chairman of the Senate Legislative Ethics Committee of the potential conflict. The matter shall then be immediately referred to the Legislative Ethics Committee for its recommendation. The Committee shall issue an oral recommendation to the Senator making the request as soon as possible after considering the request. The Committee shall follow the oral recommendation with a written report as required by Senate Rule 95.</p> <p>94. The Legislative Ethics Committee shall meet as soon as possible and render an advisory opinion on the question raised. Should the committee vote result in a tie, the effect will be to make no recommendation.</p> <p>95. The written report of the Legislative Ethics Committee shall be forwarded to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Senate Minority Leader. Copies of the report and the written statement of the Senator making the request shall be maintained in the offices of the Majority Attorney and the Minority Attorney. The committee's written report and the written statement of the Senator making the request under Rule 92 shall remain confidential unless the Senator making the request consents to their disclosure.</p> <p>96. In addition to any meetings held under Rule 94, the Senate Legislative Ethics Committee shall meet and may recommend amendments to the code of ethics for the Senate not later than thirty (30) days after the first session day of each legislative session, pursuant to IC 2-2.1-3-6.</p>
	<p>House Code of Ethics</p> <p>Every member of the House of Representatives shall, to the best of his or her ability, be fully objective when considering a proposition upon which he or she must act, keeping the welfare of all of the citizens of the state in mind at all times.</p> <p>No member of the House of Representatives shall sponsor or cast a vote on any legislative matter, except budget or general revenue bills, that might reasonably be expected to directly result in a substantial increase of his or her non-legislative income. Any member of the House of Representatives not voting for this reason shall be considered present for the purpose of determining a quorum. If a significant number of members are so affected, the House of</p>

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	<p>Representatives or a committee thereof, as the case may be, may, by a vote of two-thirds of those voting, permit such members to vote.</p> <p>Every member shall give freely of his or her particular expertise during a discussion or debate upon a given proposition; in doing so the member shall, insofar as it is possible, present the positions of all sides of the proposition.</p>
Iowa	<p>§ 68B.2A Conflicts of interest -- outside employment and activities.</p> <p>1. Any person who serves or is employed by the state or a political subdivision of the state shall not engage in any outside employment or activity which is in conflict with the person's official duties and responsibilities. In determining whether particular outside employment or activity creates an unacceptable conflict of interest, situations in which an unacceptable conflict shall be deemed to exist shall include, but not to be limited to, any of the following:</p> <p>a. The outside employment or activity involves the use of the state's or the political subdivision's time, facilities, equipment, and supplies or the use of the state or political subdivision badge, uniform, business card, or other evidences of office or employment to give the person or member of the person's immediate family an advantage or pecuniary benefit that is not available to other similarly situated members or classes of members of the general public. This paragraph does not apply to off-duty peace officers who provide private duty security or fire fighters or emergency medical care providers certified under chapter 147A who provide private duty fire safety or emergency medical services while carrying their badge or wearing their official uniform, provided that the person has secured the prior approval of the agency or political subdivision in which the person is regularly employed to engage in the activity. For purposes of this subsection, a person is not "similarly situated" merely by being or being related to a person who serves or is employed by the state or a political subdivision of the state.</p> <p>b. The outside employment or activity involves the receipt of, promise of, or acceptance of money or other consideration by the person, or a member of the person's immediate family, from anyone other than the state or the political subdivision for the performance of any act that the person would be required or expected to perform as a part of the person's regular duties or during the hours during which the person performs service or work for the state or political subdivision of the state.</p> <p>c. The outside employment or activity is subject to the official control, inspection, review, audit, or enforcement authority of the person, during the performance of the person's duties of office or employment.</p> <p>2. If the outside employment or activity is employment or activity described in subsection 1, paragraph "a" or "b", the person shall immediately cease the employment or activity. If the outside employment or activity is employment or activity described in subsection 1, paragraph "c", or constitutes any other unacceptable conflict of interest, unless otherwise provided by law, the person shall take one of the following courses of action:</p> <p>a. Cease the outside employment or activity.</p> <p>b. Publicly disclose the existence of the conflict and refrain from taking any official action or performing any official duty that would detrimentally affect or create a benefit for the outside employment or activity. For purposes of this paragraph, "official action" or "official duty" includes, but is not limited to, participating in any vote, taking affirmative action to influence any vote, granting any license or permit, determining the facts or law in a contested case or rulemaking proceeding, conducting any inspection, or providing any other official service or thing that is not available generally to members of the public in order to further the interests of the outside employment or activity.</p> <p>3. Unless otherwise specifically provided the requirements of this section shall be in addition to, and shall not supersede, any other rights or remedies provided by law.</p>
Kansas	<p>§ 46-229. "Substantial interest" and "client or customer" defined.</p> <p>"Substantial interest" means any of the following:</p> <p>(a) If an individual or an individual's spouse, either individually or collectively, has owned within the preceding 12 months a legal or equitable interest exceeding \$ 5,000 or 5% of any business, whichever is less, the individual has a substantial interest in that business.</p> <p>(b) If an individual or an individual's spouse, either individually or collectively, has received during the preceding calendar year compensation which is or will be required to be included as taxable income on federal income tax returns of the individual and spouse in an aggregate amount of \$ 2,000 from any business or combination of businesses, the individual has a substantial interest in that business or combination of businesses.</p> <p>(c) If an individual or an individual's spouse, either individually or collectively, has received directly or indirectly in the preceding 12 months, gifts or honoraria having an aggregate value of \$ 500 or more from any person, the individual has a substantial interest in that person. If a gift is received for which the value is unknown, the individual shall be deemed to have a substantial</p>

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	<p>interest in the donor. A substantial interest does not exist under this subsection by reason of: (1) A gift or bequest received as the result of the death of the donor; (2) a gift from a spouse, parent, grandparent, sibling, aunt or uncle; or (3) acting as a trustee of a trust for the benefit of another.</p> <p>(d) If an individual or an individual's spouse holds the position of officer, director, associate, partner or proprietor of any business, the individual has a substantial interest in that business, irrespective of the amount of compensation received by the individual or individual's spouse.</p> <p>(e) If an individual or an individual's spouse receives compensation which is a portion or percentage of each separate fee or commission paid to a business or combination of businesses, the individual has a substantial interest in any client or customer who pays fees or commissions to the business or combination of businesses from which fees or commissions the individual or the individual's spouse, either individually or collectively, received an aggregate of \$ 2,000 or more in the preceding calendar year.</p> <p>As used in this subsection, "client or customer" means a business or combination of businesses.</p>
Kentucky	<p>Kentucky Constitution, Section 57</p> <p>A member who has a personal or private interest in any measure or bill proposed or pending before the General Assembly, shall disclose the fact to the House of which he is a member, and shall not vote thereon upon pain of expulsion.</p>
	<p>Kentucky Revised Statutes, 6.731. General standards of conduct.</p> <p>Penalties.</p> <p>A legislator, by himself or through others, shall not intentionally:</p> <p>(1) Use or attempt to use his influence as a member of the General Assembly in any matter which involves a substantial conflict between his personal interest and his duties in the public interest. Violation of this subsection is a Class A misdemeanor;</p> <p>(2) Use his official position or office to obtain financial gain for himself, any members of the legislator's family, or a business associate of the legislator. Violation of this subsection is a Class D felony;</p> <p>(3) Use or attempt to use his official position to secure or create privileges, exemptions, advantages, or treatment for himself or others in direct contravention of the public interest at large. Violation of this subsection is a Class A misdemeanor;</p> <p>(4) Use public funds, time, or personnel for his private gain or that of another, unless the use is authorized by law. Violation of this subsection is a Class A misdemeanor...</p>
Louisiana	<p>LOUISIANA REVISED STATUTES § 42:1120. Recusal from voting.</p> <p>If any elected official, in the discharge of a duty or responsibility of his office or position, would be required to vote on a matter which vote would be a violation of R.S. 42:1112, he shall recuse himself from voting. An elected official who recuses himself from voting pursuant to this Section shall not be prohibited from participating in discussion and debate concerning the matter, provided that he verbally discloses the nature of the conflict or potential conflict during his participation in the discussion or debate and prior to any vote taken on the matter.</p>
	<p>LOUISIANA REVISED STATUTES § 42:1112. Participation in certain transactions involving the governmental entity.</p> <p>A. No public servant, except as provided in R.S. 42:1120, shall participate in a transaction in which he has a personal substantial economic interest of which he may be reasonably expected to know involving the governmental entity.</p> <p>B. No public servant, except as provided in R.S. 42:1120, shall participate in a transaction involving the governmental entity in which, to his actual knowledge, any of the following persons has a substantial economic interest:</p> <p>(1) Any member of his immediate family.</p> <p>(2) Any person in which he has a substantial economic interest of which he may reasonably be expected to know.</p> <p>(3) Any person of which he is an officer, director, trustee, partner, or employee.</p> <p>(4) Any person with whom he is negotiating or has an arrangement concerning prospective employment.</p> <p>(5) Any person who is a party to an existing contract with such public servant, or with any legal entity in which the public servant exercises control or owns an interest in excess of twenty-five percent, or who owes any thing of economic value to such public servant, or to any legal entity in which the public servant exercises control or owns an interest in excess of twenty-five percent, and who by reason thereof is in a position to affect directly the economic interests of such public servant.</p>

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	<p>C. Every public employee, excluding an appointed member of any board or commission, shall disqualify himself from participating in a transaction involving the governmental entity when a violation of this Part would result. The procedures for such disqualification shall be established by regulations issued pursuant to R.S. 42:1134(1).</p> <p>D. No appointed member of any board or commission, except as otherwise provided in R.S. 42:1120.1, 1120.2, or 1120.3, shall participate or be interested in any transaction involving the agency when a violation of this Part would result.</p>
Maine	<p>TITLE 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS § 1014. Conflict of interest.</p> <p>1. Situations involving conflict of interest. A Legislator engages in a violation of legislative ethics if that Legislator votes on a question in connection with a conflict of interest in committee or in either body of the Legislature or attempts to influence the outcome of that question unless a presiding officer in accordance with the Joint Rules of the Legislature requires a Legislator to vote or advises the Legislator that there is no conflict in accordance with section 1013, subsection 2, paragraph K. A conflict of interest includes:</p> <p>A. Where a Legislator or a member of his immediate family has or acquires a direct substantial personal financial interest, distinct from that of the general public, in an enterprise which would be financially benefited by proposed legislation, or derives a direct substantial personal financial benefit from close economic association with a person known by the Legislator to have a direct financial interest in an enterprise affected by proposed legislation.</p> <p>B. Where a Legislator or a member of his immediate family accepts gifts, other than campaign contributions duly recorded as required by law, from persons affected by legislation or who have an interest in a business affected by proposed legislation, where it is known or reasonably should be known that the purpose of the donor in making the gift is to influence the Legislator in the performance of his official duties or vote, or is intended as a reward for action on his part.</p> <p>C. Receiving compensation or reimbursement not authorized by law for services, advice or assistance as a Legislator.</p> <p>D. Appearing for, representing or assisting another in respect to a claim before the Legislature, unless without compensation and for the benefit of a citizen.</p> <p>E. Where a Legislator or a member of his immediate family accepts or engages in employment which could impair the Legislator's judgment, or where the Legislator knows that there is a substantial possibility that an opportunity for employment is being afforded him or a member of his immediate family with intent to influence his conduct in the performance of his official duties, or where the Legislator or a member of his immediate family stands to derive a personal private gain or loss from employment, because of legislative action, distinct from the gain or losses of other employees or the general community.</p> <p>F. Where a Legislator or a member of his immediate family has an interest in legislation relating to a profession, trade, business or employment in which the Legislator or a member of his immediate family is engaged, where the benefit derived by the Legislator or a member of his immediate family is unique and distinct from that of the general public or persons engaged in similar professions, trades, businesses or employment.</p> <p>2-A. Undue influence. It is a violation of legislative ethics for a Legislator to engage in conduct that constitutes the exertion of undue influence, including, but not limited to:</p> <p>A. Appearing for, representing or advocating for another person in a matter before a state agency or authority, for compensation other than compensation as a Legislator, if the Legislator makes reference to that Legislator's legislative capacity, communicates with the agency or authority on legislative stationery or makes threats or implications relating to legislative action;</p> <p>B. Appearing for, representing or advocating for another person in a matter before a state agency or authority if the Legislator oversees the policies of the agency or authority as a result of the Legislator's committee responsibilities, unless:</p> <p>(1) The appearance, representation or advocacy is provided without compensation and for the benefit of a constituent;</p> <p>(2) The Legislator is engaged in the conduct of the Legislator's profession and is in good standing with a licensing board, if any, that oversees the Legislator's profession;</p> <p>(3) The appearance, representation or advocacy is provided before a court or office of the judicial branch; or</p> <p>(4) The representation consists of filing records or reports or performing other routine tasks that do not involve the exercise of discretion on the part of the agency or authority; and</p> <p>C. Representing or assisting another person in the sale of goods or services to the State, a state agency or a state authority, unless the transaction occurs after public notice and competitive bidding.</p> <p>3. ABUSE OF OFFICE OR POSITION. It is presumed that a conflict of interest exists where a Legislator abuses his office or position, including but not limited to the following cases.</p>

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	<p>A. Where a legislator or a member of his immediate family has a direct financial interest or an interest through a close economic association in a contract for goods or services with the State, a state agency or authority in a transaction not covered by public notice and competitive bidding or by uniform rates established by the State, a state agency, authority or other governmental entity or by a professional association or organization.</p> <p>B. Granting or obtaining special privilege, exemption or preferential treatment to or for oneself or another, which privilege, exemption or treatment is not readily available to members of the general community or class to which the beneficiary belongs.</p> <p>C. Use or disclosure of confidential information obtained because of office or position for the benefit of self or another.</p>
Maryland	<p>§ 15-511. Disqualification -- Presumption of conflict.</p> <p>(a) "Close economic association" defined.</p> <p>(1) In this section, "close economic association" means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) a legislator's: 1. employer; 2. employee; or 3. partner in a business or professional enterprise; (ii) a partnership, limited liability partnership, or limited liability company in which a legislator has invested capital or owns an interest; (iii) a corporation in which a legislator owns the lesser of: 1. 10% or more of the outstanding capital stock; or 2. capital stock with a cumulative value of \$ 25,000 or more; and (iv) a corporation in which the legislator is an officer, director, or agent. <p>(2) "Close economic association" does not mean stock owned directly through a mutual fund, retirement plan, or other similar commingled investment vehicle the individual investments of which the legislator does not control or manage.</p> <p>(b) Disqualification.</p> <p>(1) An interest of a member of the General Assembly conflicts with the public interest if the legislator's interest tends to impair the legislator's independence of judgment</p> <p>(2) The conflict disqualifies the legislator from participating in any legislative action, or otherwise attempting to influence any legislation, to which the conflict relates.</p> <p>(c) Presumption of conflict. -- It is presumed that an interest disqualifies a legislator from participating in legislative action in any of the following circumstances:</p> <p>(1) having or acquiring a direct interest in an enterprise which would be affected by the legislator's vote on proposed legislation, unless the interest is common to all members of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) a profession or occupation of which the legislator is a member; or (ii) the general public or a large class of the general public; <p>(2) benefiting financially from a close economic association with a person whom the legislator knows has a direct interest in an enterprise or interest which would be affected by the legislator's participation in legislative action, differently from other like enterprises or interests;</p> <p>(3) benefiting financially from a close economic association with a person who is lobbying for the purpose of influencing legislative action; or</p> <p>(4) soliciting, accepting, or agreeing to accept a loan, other than a loan from a commercial lender in the normal course of business, from a person who would be affected by or has an interest in an enterprise which would be affected by the legislator's participation in legislative action.</p>
Massachusetts	<p>Senate Rule 10. No member, officer, or employee shall use or attempt to use improper means to influence an agency, board, authority, or commission of the Commonwealth or any political subdivision of the Commonwealth. No member, officer, or employee of the Senate shall receive compensation or permit compensation to accrue to the member, officer or employee's beneficial interest by virtue of influence improperly exerted from the member, officer or employee's position in the Senate. Every reasonable effort shall be made to avoid situations where it might appear that the member, officer or employee is making such use of the member, officer or employee's official position. Members, officers, and employees should avoid accepting or retaining an economic interest or opportunity which represents a threat to their independence of judgment.</p> <p>Senate Rule 16A. (1.) While members, officers and employees should not be denied those opportunities available to all other citizens to acquire and retain private, economic and other interests, members, officers, and employees should exercise prudence in any and all such endeavors and make every reasonable effort to avoid transactions, activities, or obligations, which are in substantial conflict with or will substantially impair their independence of judgment.</p> <p>(4.) No member, officer or employee shall receive any compensation or permit any</p>

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	compensation to accrue to his or her beneficial interest by virtue of influence improperly exerted from his or her official position in the House.
	<p>Chapter 268A Conduct of Public Officials and Employees § 6A. Notifying State Ethics Commission of Conflict of Interest.</p> <p>Any public official, as defined by section one of chapter two hundred and sixty-eight B, who in the discharge of his official duties would be required knowingly to take an action which would substantially affect such official's financial interests, unless the effect on such an official is no greater than the effect on the general public, shall file a written description of the required action and the potential conflict of interest with the state ethics commission.</p>
Michigan	<p>§ 15.302. Prohibition of substantial conflict of interest.</p> <p>Sec. 2. No member of the legislature, herein referred to as a "legislator", nor any state officer shall be interested directly or indirectly in any contract with the state or any political subdivision thereof which shall cause a substantial conflict of interest.</p>
	<p>§ 15.304 Pecuniary interest; cases in which there is no substantial conflict of interest.</p> <p>Sec. 4. (1) As used in section 2, "interested" means a pecuniary interest.</p> <p>(2) If there is a conflict of interest on the part of a legislator or state officer in respect to a contract with the state or a political subdivision of the state, to be prohibited by this act his or her personal interest must be of such substance as to induce action on his or her part to promote the contract for his or her own personal benefit.</p> <p>(3) In the following cases, there is no substantial conflict of interest:</p> <p>(a) A contract between the state or a political subdivision of the state and any of the following:</p> <p>(i) A corporation in which a legislator or state officer is a stockholder owning 1% or less of the total stock outstanding in any class if the stock is not listed on a stock exchange or the stock has a present market value of \$25,000.00 or less if the stock is listed on a stock exchange.</p> <p>(ii) A corporation in which a trust, where a legislator or state officer is a beneficiary under the trust, owns 1% or less of the total stock outstanding in any class if the stock is not listed on a stock exchange or the stock has a present market value of \$25,000.00 or less if the stock is listed on a stock exchange.</p> <p>(iii) A professional limited liability company organized pursuant to the Michigan limited liability company act, Act No. 23 of the Public Acts of 1993, being sections 450.5101 to 450.6200 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, if a legislator or state officer is an employee but not a member of the company.</p> <p>(b) A contract between the state or a political subdivision of the state and any of the following:</p> <p>(i) A corporation in which a legislator or state officer is a stockholder owning more than 1% of the total stock outstanding in any class if the stock is not listed on a stock exchange or the stock has a present market value in excess of \$25,000.00 if the stock is listed on a stock exchange or a director, officer, or employee.</p> <p>(ii) A firm, partnership, or other unincorporated association, in which a legislator or state officer is a partner, member, or employee.</p> <p>(iii) A corporation or firm that has an indebtedness owed to a legislator or state officer.</p> <p>(iv) A trustee or trustees under a trust in which a legislator or state officer is a beneficiary or trustee or a corporation in whose stock the trust funds are invested, if the investment includes more than 1% of the total stock outstanding in any class if the stock is not listed on a stock exchange or if the stock has a present market value in excess of \$25,000.00 if the stock is listed on a stock exchange, if the legislator or state officer does not solicit the contract, takes no part in the negotiations for or in the approval of the contract or any amendment to the contract, and does not in any way represent either party in the transaction and the contract is not with or authorized by the department or agency of the state or a political subdivision with which the state officer is connected.</p> <p>(c) A contract between the state and a political subdivision of the state or between political subdivisions of the state.</p> <p>(d) A contract awarded to the lowest qualified bidder, upon receipt of sealed bids pursuant to a published notice for bids provided the notice does not bar, except as authorized by law, any qualified person, firm, corporation, or trust from bidding. This subdivision does not apply to amendments or renegotiations of a contract or to additional payments under the contract which were not authorized by the contract at the time of award.</p> <p>(e) A contract for public utility services where the rates for the services are regulated by the state or federal government.</p> <p>Senate Rule 1.303. Improper influence. A Senator shall not accept anything that will influence his or her official act, decision, or vote.</p> <p>1.305. A Senator shall not use his or her influence in any matter that involves substantial conflict between his or her personal interest and his or her duties in the public interest.</p> <p>1.306. A personal, private, or professional interest in a bill is an interest that would provide a benefit particular to a Senator or a benefit particular to any individual or entity to whom the Senator is financially or legally obligated or is personally related.</p>
	House Rule 47. A Member shall not use his or her position in any manner to solicit or obtain anything of value for himself or herself, House employees or any other Member which tends to influence the manner in which the Member performs his or her official duties.

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Minnesota	<p>§ 10A.07 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.</p> <p>A public official or a local official elected to or appointed by a metropolitan governmental unit who in the discharge of official duties would be required to take an action or make a decision that would substantially affect the official's financial interests or those of an associated business, unless the effect on the official is no greater than on other members of the official's business classification, profession, or occupation, must take the following actions:</p> <p>(1) prepare a written statement describing the matter requiring action or decision and the nature of the potential conflict of interest;</p> <p>(2) deliver copies of the statement to the official's immediate superior, if any; and</p> <p>(3) if a member of the legislature or of the governing body of a metropolitan governmental unit, deliver a copy of the statement to the presiding officer of the body of service.</p> <p>If a potential conflict of interest presents itself and there is insufficient time to comply with clauses (1) to (3), the public or local official must orally inform the superior or the official body of service or committee of the body of the potential conflict.</p> <p>Subd. 2. Required actions.</p> <p>If the official is not a member of the legislature or of the governing body of a metropolitan governmental unit, the superior must assign the matter, if possible, to another employee who does not have a potential conflict of interest. If there is no immediate superior, the official must abstain, if possible, in a manner prescribed by the board from influence over the action or decision in question. If the official is a member of the legislature, the house of service may, at the member's request, excuse the member from taking part in the action or decision in question. If the official is not permitted or is otherwise unable to abstain from action in connection with the matter, the official must file a statement describing the potential conflict and the action taken. A public official must file the statement with the board and a local official must file the statement with the governing body of the official's political subdivision. The statement must be filed within a week of the action taken.</p> <p>Subd. 3. Interest in contract; local officials.</p> <p>This section does not apply to a local official with respect to a matter governed by sections 471.87 and 471.88.</p>
	<p>§ 471.87 PUBLIC OFFICERS, INTEREST IN CONTRACT; PENALTY</p> <p>Except as authorized in section 471.88, a public officer who is authorized to take part in any manner in making any sale, lease, or contract in official capacity shall not voluntarily have a personal financial interest in that sale, lease, or contract or personally benefit financially therefrom. Every public officer who violates this provision is guilty of a gross misdemeanor.</p>
Mississippi	<p>§ 25-4-105. Certain actions, activities and business relationships prohibited or authorized; contracts in violation of section voidable; penalties.</p> <p>(1) No public servant shall use his official position to obtain or attempt to obtain pecuniary benefit for himself other than that compensation provided for by law, or to obtain or attempt to obtain pecuniary benefit for any relative or any business with which he is associated.</p> <p>(2) No public servant shall be interested, directly or indirectly, during the term for which he shall have been chosen, or within one (1) year after the expiration of such term, in any contract with the state, or any district, county, city or town thereof, authorized by any law passed or order made by any board of which he may be or may have been a member.</p> <p>(3) No public servant shall:</p> <p>(a) Be a contractor, subcontractor or vendor with the governmental entity of which he is a member, officer, employee or agent, other than in his contract of employment, or have a material financial interest in any business which is a contractor, subcontractor or vendor with the governmental entity of which he is a member, officer, employee or agent.</p> <p>(b) Be a purchaser, direct or indirect, at any sale made by him in his official capacity or by the governmental entity of which he is an officer or employee, except in respect of the sale of goods or services when provided as public utilities or offered to the general public on a uniform price schedule.</p> <p>(c) Be a purchaser, direct or indirect, of any claim, certificate, warrant or other security issued by or to be paid out of the treasury of the governmental entity of which he is an officer or employee.</p> <p>(d) Perform any service for any compensation during his term of office or employment by which he attempts to influence a decision of the authority of the governmental entity of which he is a member.</p>

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	<p>(e) Perform any service for any compensation for any person or business after termination of his office or employment in relation to any case, decision, proceeding or application with respect to which he was directly concerned or in which he personally participated during the period of his service or employment.</p> <p>(4) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (3) of this section, a public servant or his relative:</p> <p>(a) May be an officer or stockholder of banks or savings and loan associations or other such financial institutions bidding for bonds, notes or other evidences of debt or for the privilege of keeping as depositories the public funds of a governmental entity thereof or the editor or employee of any newspaper in which legal notices are required to be published in respect to the publication of said legal notices.</p> <p>(b) May be a contractor or vendor with any authority of the governmental entity other than the authority of the governmental entity of which he is a member, officer, employee or agent or have a material financial interest in a business which is a contractor or vendor with any authority of the governmental entity other than the authority of the governmental entity of which he is a member, officer, employee or agent where such contract is let to the lowest and best bidder after competitive bidding and three (3) or more legitimate bids are received or where the goods, services or property involved are reasonably available from two (2) or fewer commercial sources, provided such transactions comply with the public purchases laws.</p> <p>(c) May be a subcontractor with any authority of the governmental entity other than the authority of the governmental entity of which he is a member, officer, employee or agent or have a material financial interest in a business which is a subcontractor with any authority of the governmental entity other than the authority of the governmental entity of which he is a member, officer, employee or agent where the primary contract is let to the lowest and best bidder after competitive bidding or where such goods or services involved are reasonably available from two (2) or fewer commercial sources, provided such transactions comply with the public purchases laws.</p> <p>(d) May be a contractor, subcontractor or vendor with any authority of the governmental entity of which he is a member, officer, employee or agent or have a material financial interest in a business which is a contractor, subcontractor or vendor with any authority of the governmental entity of which he is a member, officer, employee or agent: (i) where such goods or services involved are reasonably available from two (2) or fewer commercial sources, provided such transactions comply with the public purchases laws; or (ii) where the contractual relationship involves the further research, development, testing, promotion or merchandising of an intellectual property created by the public servant.</p> <p>(e) May purchase securities issued by the governmental entity of which he is an officer or employee if such securities are offered to the general public and are purchased at the same price as such securities are offered to the general public.</p> <p>(f) May have an interest less than a material financial interest in a business which is a contractor, subcontractor or vendor with any governmental entity.</p> <p>(g) May contract with the Mississippi Veteran's Home Purchase Board, Mississippi Housing Finance Corporation, or any other state loan program, for the purpose of securing a loan; however, public servants shall not receive favored treatment.</p> <p>(h) May be employed by or receive compensation from an authority of the governmental entity other than the authority of the governmental entity of which the public servant is an officer or employee.</p> <p>(i) If a member of the Legislature or other public servant employed on less than a full-time basis, may represent a person or organization for compensation before an authority of the governmental entity other than an authority of the governmental entity of which he is an officer or employee.</p> <p>(j) If a constable, may be employed and receive compensation as a deputy sheriff or other employee of the county for which he serves as constable.</p> <p>(5) No person may intentionally use or disclose information gained in the course of or by reason of his official position or employment as a public servant in any way that could result in pecuniary benefit for himself, any relative, or any other person, if the information has not been communicated to the public or is not public information.</p> <p>(6) Any contract made in violation of this section may be declared void by the governing body of the contracting or selling authority of the governmental subdivision or a court of competent jurisdiction and the contractor or subcontractor shall retain or receive only the reasonable value, with no increment for profit or commission, of the property or the services furnished prior to the date of receiving notice that the contract has been voided.</p>

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	(7) Any person violating the provisions of this section shall be punished as provided for in Sections 25-4-109 and 25-4-111.
	<p>25-4-103</p> <p>(k) "Material financial interest" means a personal and pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, accruing to a public servant or spouse, either individually or in combination with each other. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the following shall not be deemed to be a material financial interest with respect to a business with which a public servant may be associated:</p> <p>(i) Ownership of any interest of less than ten percent (10%) in a business where the aggregate annual net income to the public servant therefrom is less than One Thousand Dollars (\$ 1,000.00);</p> <p>(ii) Ownership of any interest of less than two percent (2%) in a business where the aggregate annual net income to the public servant therefrom is less than Five Thousand Dollars (\$ 5,000.00);</p> <p>(iii) The income as an employee of a relative if neither the public servant or relative is an officer, director or partner in the business and any ownership interest would not be deemed material pursuant to subparagraph (i) or (ii) herein; or</p> <p>(iv) The income of the spouse of a public servant when such spouse is a contractor, subcontractor or vendor with the governmental entity that employs the public servant and the public servant exercises no control, direct or indirect, over the contract between the spouse and such governmental entity.</p> <p>(l) "Pecuniary benefit" means benefit in the form of money, property, commercial interests or anything else the primary significance of which is economic gain. Expenses associated with social occasions afforded public servants shall not be deemed a pecuniary benefit.</p>
	<p>§ 25-4-119. Officials not to derive pecuniary benefits as result of official duties; penalties</p> <p>No elected or appointed official shall derive any pecuniary benefit, directly or indirectly, as a result of such elected or appointed official's duties under Sections 21-19-33, 27-109-1, 27-109-3, 27-109-7, 27-109-9, 67-1-71, 87-1-5, 95-3-25, 97-33-1, 97-33-7, 97-33-9, 97-33-17, 97-33-25, and 97-33-27. Any person convicted of a violation of this section shall be punished pursuant to the provisions of this article.</p> <p>NOTE: the statutes mentioned deal with municipal government, gaming, taxation and finance, among others.</p>
Missouri	<p>§ 105.452. Prohibited acts by elected and appointed public officials and employees.</p> <p>No elected or appointed official or employee of the state or any political subdivision thereof shall:</p> <p>(1) Act or refrain from acting in any capacity in which he is lawfully empowered to act as such an official or employee by reason of any payment, offer to pay, promise to pay, or receipt of anything of actual pecuniary value paid or payable, or received or receivable, to himself or any third person, including any gift or campaign contribution, made or received in relationship to or as a condition of the performance of an official act, other than compensation to be paid by the state or political subdivision; or</p> <p>(2) Use confidential information obtained in the course of or by reason of his employment or official capacity in any manner with intent to result in financial gain for himself, his spouse, his dependent child in his custody, or any business with which he is associated;</p> <p>(3) Disclose confidential information obtained in the course of or by reason of his employment or official capacity in any manner with intent to result in financial gain for himself or any other person;</p> <p>(4) Favorably act on any matter that is so specifically designed so as to provide a special monetary benefit to such official or his spouse or dependent children, including but not limited to increases in retirement benefits, whether received from the state of Missouri or any third party by reason of such act. For the purposes of this subdivision, "special monetary benefit" means being materially affected in a substantially different manner or degree than the manner or degree in which the public in general will be affected or, if the matter affects only a special class of persons, then affected in a substantially different manner or degree than the manner or degree in which such class will be affected. In all such matters such officials must recuse themselves from acting and shall not be relieved by reason of the provisions of section 105.460, except that such official may act on increases in compensation subject to the restrictions of section 13 of article VII of the Missouri Constitution; or</p> <p>(5) Use his decision-making authority for the purpose of obtaining a financial gain which materially enriches himself, his spouse or dependent children by acting or refraining from acting for the purpose of coercing or extorting from another anything of actual pecuniary value.</p>
Montana	<p>§ 2-2-112 Ethical requirements for legislators.</p> <p>(1) The requirements in this section are intended as rules for legislator conduct, and violations constitute a breach of the public trust of legislative office.</p>

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	<p>(2) A legislator has a responsibility to the legislator's constituents to participate in all matters as required in the rules of the legislature. A legislator concerned with the possibility of a conflict may briefly present the facts to the committee of that house that is assigned the determination of ethical issues. The committee shall advise the legislator as to whether the legislator should disclose the interest prior to voting on the issue pursuant to the provisions of subsection (5). The legislator may, subject to legislative rule, vote on an issue on which the legislator has a conflict, after disclosing the interest.</p> <p>(3) When a legislator is required to take official action on a legislative matter as to which the legislator has a conflict created by a personal or private interest that would directly give rise to an appearance of impropriety as to the legislator's influence, benefit, or detriment in regard to the legislative matter, the legislator shall disclose the interest creating the conflict prior to participating in the official action, as provided in subsections (2) and (5) and the rules of the legislature. In making a decision, the legislator shall consider:</p> <p>(a) whether the conflict impedes the legislator's independence of judgment;</p> <p>(b) the effect of the legislator's participation on public confidence in the integrity of the legislature;</p> <p>(c) whether the legislator's participation is likely to have any significant effect on the disposition of the matter; and</p> <p>(d) whether a pecuniary interest is involved or whether a potential occupational, personal, or family benefit could arise from the legislator's participation.</p> <p>(4) A conflict situation does not arise from legislation or legislative duties affecting the membership of a profession, occupation, or class.</p> <p>(5) A legislator shall disclose an interest creating a conflict, as provided in the rules of the legislature. A legislator who is a member of a profession, occupation, or class affected by legislation is not required to disclose an interest unless the class contained in the legislation is so narrow that the vote will have a direct and distinctive personal impact on the legislator. A legislator may seek a determination from the appropriate committee provided for in 2-2-135.</p>
Nebraska	<p>§ 49-1499. Legislature; discharge of official duties; potential conflict; actions required.</p> <p>(1) A member of the Legislature who would be required to take any action or make any decision in the discharge of his or her official duties that may cause financial benefit or detriment to him or her, a member of his or her immediate family, or a business with which he or she is associated, which is distinguishable from the effects of such action on the public generally or a broad segment of the public, shall take the following actions as soon as he or she is aware of such potential conflict or should reasonably be aware of such potential conflict, whichever is sooner:</p> <p>(a) Prepare a written statement describing the matter requiring action or decision and the nature of the potential conflict, and if he or she will not abstain from voting, deliberating, or taking other action on the matter, the statement shall state why, despite the potential conflict, he or she intends to vote or otherwise participate; and</p> <p>(b) Deliver a copy of the statement to the commission and to the Speaker of the Legislature who shall cause the statement to be filed with the Clerk of the Legislature to be held as a matter of public record.</p> <p>(2) Nothing in this section shall prohibit any member of the Legislature from voting, deliberating, or taking other action on any matter that comes before the Legislature.</p> <p>(3) The member of the Legislature may abstain from voting, deliberating, or taking other action on the matter on which the potential conflict exists. He or she may have the reasons for the abstention recorded in the Legislative Journal.</p>
Nevada	<p>NRS 281A.400 A public officer or employee shall not use the public officer's or employee's position in government to secure or grant unwarranted privileges, preferences, exemptions or advantages for the public officer or employee, any business entity in which the public officer or employee has a significant pecuniary interest, or any person to whom the public officer or employee has a commitment in a private capacity to the interests of that person. As used in this subsection "unwarranted" means without justification or adequate reason.</p> <p>281A.420: (DOES NOT APPLY TO LEGISLATORS - see part 7)</p> <p>1. Except as otherwise provided in this section, a public officer or employee shall not approve, disapprove, vote, abstain from voting or otherwise act upon a matter: (a) Regarding which the public officer or employee has accepted a gift or loan; (b) In which the public officer or employee has a significant pecuniary interest; or (c) Which would reasonably be affected by the public officer's or employee's commitment in a private capacity to the interests of another person, without disclosing information concerning the gift or loan, significant pecuniary interest or commitment in a private capacity to the interests of the person that is sufficient to inform the public of the potential effect of the action or abstention upon the person who provided the gift or</p>

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	<p>loan, upon the public officer's or employee's significant pecuniary interest, or upon the person to whom the public officer or employee has a commitment in a private capacity. Such a disclosure must be made at the time the matter is considered. If the public officer or employee is a member of a body which makes decisions, the public officer or employee shall make the disclosure in public to the chair and other members of the body. If the public officer or employee is not a member of such a body and holds an appointive office, the public officer or employee shall make the disclosure to the supervisory head of the public officer's or employee's organization or, if the public officer holds an elective office, to the general public in the area from which the public officer is elected...</p> <p>3. Except as otherwise provided in this section, in addition to the requirements of subsection 1, a public officer shall not vote upon or advocate the passage or failure of, but may otherwise participate in the consideration of, a matter with respect to which the independence of judgment of a reasonable person in the public officer's situation would be materially affected by:</p> <p>(a) The public officer's acceptance of a gift or loan; (b) The public officer's significant pecuniary interest; or (c) The public officer's commitment in a private capacity to the interests of another person.</p> <p>4. In interpreting and applying the provisions of subsection 3:</p> <p>(a) It must be presumed that the independence of judgment of a reasonable person in the public officer's situation would not be materially affected by the public officer's acceptance of a gift or loan, significant pecuniary interest or commitment in a private capacity to the interests of another person where the resulting benefit or detriment accruing to the public officer, or if the public officer has a commitment in a private capacity to the interests of another person, accruing to the other person, is not greater than that accruing to any other member of any general business, profession, occupation or group that is affected by the matter. The presumption set forth in this paragraph does not affect the applicability of the requirements set forth in subsection 1 relating to the disclosure of the acceptance of a gift or loan, significant pecuniary interest or commitment in a private capacity to the interests of another person.</p> <p>(b) The Commission must give appropriate weight and proper deference to the public policy of this State which favors the right of a public officer to perform the duties for which the public officer was elected or appointed and to vote or otherwise act upon a matter, provided the public officer has properly disclosed the public officer's acceptance of a gift or loan, significant pecuniary interest or commitment in a private capacity to the interests of another person in the manner required by subsection 1. Because abstention by a public officer disrupts the normal course of representative government and deprives the public and the public officer's constituents of a voice in governmental affairs, the provisions of this section are intended to require abstention only in clear cases where the independence of judgment of a reasonable person in the public officer's situation would be materially affected by the public officer's acceptance of a gift or loan, significant pecuniary interest or commitment in a private capacity to the interests of another person.</p> <p>5. Except as otherwise provided in NRS 241.0355, if a public officer declares to the body or committee in which the vote is to be taken that the public officer will abstain from voting because of the requirements of this section, the necessary quorum to act upon and the number of votes necessary to act upon the matter, as fixed by any statute, ordinance or rule, is reduced as though the member abstaining were not a member of the body or committee.</p> <p>7. The provisions of this section do not, under any circumstances, apply to State Legislators or allow the Commission to exercise jurisdiction or authority over State Legislators. The responsibility of a State Legislator to make disclosures concerning gifts, loans, interests or commitments and the responsibility of a State Legislator to abstain from voting upon or advocating the passage or failure of a matter are governed by the Standing Rules of the Legislative Department of State Government which are adopted, administered and enforced exclusively by the appropriate bodies of the Legislative Department of State Government pursuant to Section 6 of Article 4 of the Nevada Constitution.</p> <p>281.221. Contracts in which state officer has interest prohibited; exceptions; penalties.</p> <p>1. Except as otherwise provided in this section and NRS 281A.430, it is unlawful for a state officer, who is not a member of the Legislature subject to the restrictions set forth in NRS 218A.970, to:</p> <p>(a) Become a contractor under any contract or order for supplies or other kind of contract authorized by or for the State or any of its departments, or the Legislature or either of its houses, or to be interested, directly or indirectly, as principal, in any kind of contract so authorized.</p> <p>(b) Be interested in any contract made by the officer or to be a purchaser or interested in any purchase under a sale made by the officer in the discharge of the officer's official duties.</p> <p>2. A member of any board, commission or similar body who is engaged in the profession, occupation or business regulated by the board, commission or body may supply or contract to supply, in the ordinary course of his or her business, goods, materials or services to any state or</p>

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	<p>local agency, except the board, commission or body of which he or she is a member, if the member has not taken part in developing the contract plans or specifications and the member will not be personally involved in opening, considering or accepting offers.</p> <p>3. A full- or part-time faculty member in the Nevada System of Higher Education may bid on or enter into a contract with a governmental agency, or may benefit financially or otherwise from a contract between a governmental agency and a private entity, if the contract complies with the policies established by the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada pursuant to NRS 396.255.</p> <p>4. A state officer, other than an officer described in subsection 2 or 3, may bid on or enter into a contract with a governmental agency if the contracting process is controlled by rules of open competitive bidding, the sources of supply are limited, the officer has not taken part in developing the contract plans or specifications and the officer will not be personally involved in opening, considering or accepting offers.</p> <p>5. Any contract made in violation of this section may be declared void at the instance of the State or of any other person interested in the contract except an officer prohibited from making or being interested in the contract.</p> <p>6. A person who violates this section is guilty of a gross misdemeanor and shall forfeit his or her office.</p>
	<p>Senate Rule 23 and Assembly Rule 23: Senate Rule 23: 8. In determining whether a Legislator has a conflict of interest, the Legislator should consider whether the independence of judgment of a reasonable person in his or her situation upon the matter in question would be materially affected by the Legislator's:</p> <p>(a) Acceptance of a gift or loan; (b) Private economic interest; or (c) Commitment to a member of his or her household or immediate family.</p> <p>In interpreting and applying the provisions of this subsection, it must be presumed that the independence of judgment of a reasonable person in the Legislator's situation would not be materially affected by the Legislator's private economic interest or the Legislator's commitment to a member of his or her household or immediate family where the resulting benefit or detriment accruing to the Legislator, or if the Legislator has a commitment to a member of his or her household or immediate family, accruing to those other persons, is not greater than that accruing to any other member of the general business, profession, occupation or group that is affected by the matter.</p>
Sj % Mfr uxmwj	<p>Per the General Court's Ethics Guidelines</p> <p>§ 2, pt. 2. "Conflict of Interest" is the condition in which a legislator has a financial interest in any official activity.</p> <p>If participation in an official activity creates a conflict of interest not disclosed in the financial disclosure forms, legislators must complete and file a Declaration of Intent Form in accordance with section 5 of the Ethics Guidelines. Even if legislators disclose a financial interest on this form, he may still have to file a separate Declaration of Intent Form on a particular bill.</p>
New Jersey	<p>§ 52:13D-13. Definitions</p> <p>...</p> <p>(g) "Interest" means (1) the ownership or control of more than 10% of the profits or assets of a firm, association, or partnership, or more than 10% of the stock in a corporation for profit other than a professional service corporation organized under the "Professional Service Corporation Act," P.L. 1969, c. 232 (C. 14A:17-1 et seq.); or (2) the ownership or control of more than 1% of the profits of a firm, association, or partnership, or more than 1% of the stock in any corporation, which is the holder of, or an applicant for, a casino license or in any holding or intermediary company with respect thereto, as defined by the "Casino Control Act," P.L. 1977, c. 110 (C. 5:12-1 et seq.). The provisions of this act governing the conduct of individuals are applicable to shareholders, associates or professional employees of a professional service corporation regardless of the extent or amount of their shareholder interest in such a corporation.</p>
	<p>§ 52:13D-23. Codes of ethics.</p> <p>(a) (1) The head of each State agency, or the principal officer in charge of a division, board, bureau, commission or other instrumentality within a department of State Government designated by the head of such department for the purposes hereinafter set forth, shall within six months from the date of enactment, promulgate a code of ethics to govern and guide the conduct of the members of the Legislature...</p> <p>(e) A code of ethics for officers and employees of a State agency shall conform to the following general standards:</p> <p>(1) No State officer or employee or special State officer or employee should have any interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or engage in any business or transaction or professional activity, which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his duties in the public interest.</p>

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	<p>(2) No State officer or employee or special State officer or employee should engage in any particular business, profession, trade or occupation which is subject to licensing or regulation by a specific agency of State Government without promptly filing notice of such activity with the State Ethics Commission, if he is an officer or employee in the Executive Branch, or with the Joint Legislative Committee on Ethical Standards, if he is an officer or employee in the Legislative Branch.</p> <p>(3) No State officer or employee or special State officer or employee should use or attempt to use his official position to secure unwarranted privileges or advantages for himself or others.</p> <p>(4) No State officer or employee or special State officer or employee should act in his official capacity in any matter wherein he has a direct or indirect personal financial interest that might reasonably be expected to impair his objectivity or independence of judgment.</p> <p>(5) No State officer or employee or special State officer or employee should undertake any employment or service, whether compensated or not, which might reasonably be expected to impair his objectivity and independence of judgment in the exercise of his official duties.</p> <p>(6) No State officer or employee or special State officer or employee should accept any gift, favor, service or other thing of value under circumstances from which it might be reasonably inferred that such gift, service or other thing of value was given or offered for the purpose of influencing him in the discharge of his official duties.</p> <p>(7) No State officer or employee or special State officer or employee should knowingly act in any way that might reasonably be expected to create an impression or suspicion among the public having knowledge of his acts that he may be engaged in conduct violative of his trust as a State officer or employee or special State officer or employee.</p> <p>(8) Rules of conduct adopted pursuant to these principles should recognize that under our democratic form of government public officials and employees should be drawn from all of our society, that citizens who serve in government cannot and should not be expected to be without any personal interest in the decisions and policies of government; that citizens who are government officials and employees have a right to private interests of a personal, financial and economic nature; that standards of conduct should separate those conflicts of interest which are unavoidable in a free society from those conflicts of interest which are substantial and material, or which bring government into disrepute.</p> <p>(f) The code of ethics for members of the Legislature shall conform to subsection (e) hereof as nearly as may be possible.</p>
	<p>New Jersey Legislative Code of Ethics.</p> <p>For the purpose of this section a "personal interest" means the member of the Legislature, or a member of his immediate family, believes or has reason to believe he will derive a direct monetary gain or suffer a direct monetary loss by the enactment or defeat of the legislation; a "personal interest" does not mean that by enactment or defeat of the legislation no benefit or detriment could be expected to accrue to him, or to a member of his immediate family, as a member of a business, profession, occupation or group, to any greater extent than any such benefit or detriment could be expected to accrue to any other member of such business, profession, occupation or group (C.52:13D-18).</p>
Sj Rj}nt	<p>§ 10-16-2. Definitions.</p> <p>F. "financial interest" means an interest held by an individual or the individual's family that is: (1) an ownership interest in business or property; or (2) any employment or prospective employment for which negotiations have already begun;</p> <p>H. "official act" means an official decision, recommendation, approval, disapproval or other action that involves the use of discretionary authority;</p> <p>J. "standards" means the conduct required by the Governmental Conduct Act;</p> <p>L. "substantial interest" means an ownership interest that is greater than twenty percent.</p>
	<p>§ 10-16-3. Ethical principles of public service; certain official acts prohibited; penalty.</p> <p>A. A legislator or public officer or employee shall treat the legislator's or public officer's or employee's government position as a public trust. The legislator or public officer or employee shall use the powers and resources of public office only to advance the public interest and not to obtain personal benefits or pursue private interests.</p> <p>B. Legislators and public officers and employees shall conduct themselves in a manner that justifies the confidence placed in them by the people, at all times maintaining the integrity and discharging ethically the high responsibilities of public service.</p> <p>C. Full disclosure of real or potential conflicts of interest shall be a guiding principle for determining appropriate conduct. At all times, reasonable efforts shall be made to avoid undue influence and abuse of office in public service.</p> <p>D. No legislator or public officer or employee may request or receive, and no person may offer a legislator or public officer or employee, any money, thing of value or promise thereof that is conditioned upon or given in exchange for promised performance of an official act. Any person</p>

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	who knowingly and willfully violates the provisions of this subsection is guilty of a fourth degree felony and shall be sentenced pursuant to the provisions of Section 31-18-15 NMSA 1978.
	<p>Senate and House Rule 26-1: A. Members of the senate shall conduct themselves in a manner that justifies the confidence placed in them by the people. The members shall not use their offices for private gain and shall at all times maintain the integrity and discharge ethically the high responsibilities of their legislative positions. Full disclosure of real or potential conflicts of interest shall be a guiding principle for determining appropriate conduct of the members.</p> <p>B. To avoid a potential conflict of interest:</p> <p>(1) a senator shall not accept anything of value that improperly influences an official act, decision or vote;</p> <p>(2) a senator shall attempt to ensure that his private employment does not impair his impartiality and independence of judgment in the exercise of official duties;</p> <p>(3) a senator shall not receive compensation or reimbursement not authorized by law for rendering services, advice or assistance as a legislator;</p> <p>(4) a senator shall not accept gifts, other than lawfully collected and reported campaign contributions, from persons affected by legislation or from persons who have an interest in a business affected by proposed legislation, where it is known or reasonably should be known that the purpose of the donor in making the gift is to influence the senator in the performance of his official duties or vote or is intended as a reward for action on his part;</p> <p>(5) a senator shall not accept or engage in employment if the senator knows it is being afforded him with the intent to influence his conduct in the performance of his official duties</p>
New York	<p>PUBLIC OFFICERS LAW; ARTICLE 4. POWERS AND DUTIES OF PUBLIC OFFICERS</p> <p>§ 74. Code of ethics.</p> <p>Rule with respect to conflicts of interest. No officer or employee of a state agency, member of the legislature or legislative employee should have any interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or engage in any business or transaction or professional activity or incur any obligation of any nature, which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his duties in the public interest.</p>
North Carolina	<p>§ 138A-35. Other rules of conduct.</p> <p>(a) A public servant shall make a due and diligent effort before taking any action, including voting or participating in discussions with other public servants on a board on which the public servant also serves, to determine whether the public servant has a conflict of interest. If the public servant is unable to determine whether or not a conflict of interest may exist, the public servant has a duty to inquire of the Commission as to that conflict.</p> <p>(b) A public servant shall continually monitor, evaluate, and manage the public servant's personal, financial, and professional affairs to ensure the absence of conflicts of interest.</p> <p>(c) A public servant shall obey all other civil laws, administrative requirements, and criminal statutes governing conduct of State government applicable to appointees and employees.</p>
	<p>138A-3. Definitions.</p> <p>(14c) Financial benefit. – A direct pecuniary gain or loss to the legislator, the public servant, or a person with which the legislator or public servant is associated, or a direct pecuniary loss to a business competitor of the legislator, the public servant, or a person with which the legislator or public servant is associated.</p>
North Dakota	<p>§ 44-04-22. Conflict of interest law.</p> <p>A person acting in a legislative or quasi-legislative or judicial or quasi-judicial capacity for a political subdivision of the state who has a direct and substantial personal or pecuniary interest in a matter before that board, council, commission, or other body, must disclose the fact to the body of which that person is a member, and may not participate in or vote on that particular matter without the consent of a majority of the rest of the body.</p>
Ohio	<p>§ 102.02. Duty to file disclosure statement with ethics commission.</p> <p>(10)(B) The Ohio ethics commission shall examine each disclosure statement required to be kept confidential to determine whether a potential conflict of interest exists for the person who filed the disclosure statement. A potential conflict of interest exists if the private interests of the person, as indicated by the person's disclosure statement, might interfere with the public interests the person is required to serve in the exercise of the person's authority and duties in the person's office or position of employment. If the commission determines that a potential conflict of interest exists, it shall notify the person who filed the disclosure statement and shall make the portions of the disclosure statement that indicate a potential conflict of interest subject to public inspection in the same manner as is provided for other disclosure statements. Any portion of the disclosure statement that the commission determines does not indicate a potential conflict of interest shall be kept confidential by the commission and shall not be made subject to public inspection,</p>

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	except as is necessary for the enforcement of Chapters 102. and 2921. of the Revised Code and except as otherwise provided in this division.
Oklahoma	<p>TITLE 74. STATE GOVERNMENT; CHAPTER 62. APPENDIX. TITLE 257. ETHICS COMMISSION CHAPTER 20. ETHICS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST 257:20-1-7. Votes, deliberations, and discussions by legislators or statewide elective officers.</p> <p>(a) A legislator or statewide elective officer shall not introduce or cause to have introduced, request the introduction of, promote, or vote on any legislation if the statewide elective officer or legislator or a child adopted child, step-child or spouse of the officer or legislator or a business or entity with which the legislator or officer or a member of the immediate family of the legislator or officer is associated has: (1) a pecuniary interest in; or (2) a reasonably foreseeable benefit from; the legislation. A reasonably foreseeable benefit includes detriment to a business competitor to the legislator or statewide elective officer, to a business competitor of a member of the immediate family of the legislator or officer, or to a business competitor of a business or entity with which the legislator or officer or child, adopted child, step-child or spouse of the legislator or officer is associated. (b) A legislator or statewide elective officer may introduce or cause to have introduced, request the introduction of, promote, or vote on legislation if the only pecuniary interest or reasonably foreseeable benefit that may accrue to the legislator or officer, child, adopted child, step-child or spouse of the legislator or officer, or business or entity with which a legislator or officer or a child, adopted child, step-child or spouse of a legislator or officer is associated is incidental to the legislator's or officer's, child's, adopted child's, step-child's, or spouse's or business or entity's position, or which accrues to the legislator or officer, child, adopted child, step-child or spouse of the legislator or officer, or business or entity as a member of a profession, occupation, or large class, whichever is applicable, to no significantly greater extent than the pecuniary interest or potential benefit could reasonably be foreseen to accrue to all other members of the profession, occupation, or large class. (c) Nothing in this subsection shall allow a legislator or a member of the immediate family of a legislator, a statewide elective officer, or a business or entity with which the legislator or statewide elective officer is associated to contract with a governmental entity except as provided in Subsection (b) of Section 10 of this chapter.</p>
Oregon	<p>244.020. Definitions.</p> <p>(1) "Actual conflict of interest" means any action or any decision or recommendation by a person acting in a capacity as a public official, the effect of which would be to the private pecuniary benefit or detriment of the person or the person's relative or any business with which the person or a relative of the person is associated unless the pecuniary benefit or detriment arises out of circumstances described in subsection (12) of this section.</p> <p>(12) "Potential conflict of interest" means any action or any decision or recommendation by a person acting in a capacity as a public official, the effect of which could be to the private pecuniary benefit or detriment of the person or the person's relative, or a business with which the person or the person's relative is associated, unless the pecuniary benefit or detriment arises out of the following:</p> <p>(a) An interest or membership in a particular business, industry, occupation or other class required by law as a prerequisite to the holding by the person of the office or position.</p> <p>(b) Any action in the person's official capacity which would affect to the same degree a class consisting of all inhabitants of the state, or a smaller class consisting of an industry, occupation or other group including one of which or in which the person, or the person's relative or business with which the person or the person's relative is associated, is a member or is engaged.</p> <p>(c) Membership in or membership on the board of directors of a nonprofit corporation that is tax-exempt under section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code.</p>
Pennsylvania	<p>PENNSYLVANIA CONSOLIDATED STATUTES; TITLE 65. PUBLIC OFFICERS; PART II. ACCOUNTABILITY; CHAPTER 11. ETHICS STANDARDS AND FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE § 1102. Definitions 65 Pa.C.S. § 1102</p> <p>"Conflict" or "conflict of interest." Use by a public official or public employee of the authority of his office or employment or any confidential information received through his holding public office or employment for the private pecuniary benefit of himself, a member of his immediate family or a business with which he or a member of his immediate family is associated. The term does not include an action having a de minimis economic impact or which affects to the same degree a class consisting of the general public or a subclass consisting of an industry, occupation or other group which includes the public official or public employee, a member of his immediate family or a business with which he or a member of his immediate family is associated.</p>
Puerto Rico	TITLE 3. EXECUTIVE; CHAPTER 65. ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT ACT; SUBCHAPTER III. CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE EXECUTIVE, LEGISLATIVE AND JUDICIAL BRANCHES;

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	<p>RESTRICTIONS ON FORMER PUBLIC SERVANTS</p> <p>§ 1822. Prohibitions--Generally</p> <p>(a) No public official or employee, whether personally or acting as a public servant, shall disregard the laws in effect, or the summons or orders of the Courts of Justice, the Legislative Branch or the agencies of the Executive Branch thus empowered.</p> <p>(b) No public official or employee shall delay the rendering of services that the executive agencies of the Government of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico are obligated to render, or hinder the efficient operation of the Executive Branch.</p> <p>(c) No public official or employee shall use the duties and powers of his office, or public property or funds directly or indirectly, to obtain advantages, benefits or privileges not permitted by law, for himself, any member of his family unit, or for any other person, business or entity.</p> <p>(d) No public official or employee shall request or accept any asset whatsoever of monetary value as payment for carrying out the duties and responsibilities of his employment other than the salary, wage or compensation to which he is entitled because of his public duties or employment.</p> <p>(e) No public official or employee shall accept or solicit from any person whatsoever, directly or indirectly, either for himself, for any member of his family unit or for any other person, business or entity, any asset whatsoever of monetary value, including gifts, loans, promises, favors or services, in exchange for the actions of said public official or employee being of influence in behalf of that person or any other.</p> <p>(f) No public official or employee who is a regular employee of the Government shall receive additional pay or special compensation of any nature from the Government of Puerto Rico or from any municipality, board, commission or body which in no way depends on the Government for personal services or official services of any nature, even though they are rendered in addition to the regular functions of the official or employee, unless said special pay or compensation is expressly authorized by § 551 of this title, or any other legal provision.</p> <p>(g) No public official or employee shall reveal or use confidential information acquired as a result of his/her employment, to obtain, directly or indirectly, any economic advantage or benefit for him/her, a member of his/her family unit or for any other person, business or entity.</p> <p>(h) No public official shall intervene, in any way, in any matter in which he/she or any member of his/her family unit has a conflict of interest.</p> <p>(i) No public official or employee may appoint or promote to a position as a public official or employee or to contract, whether per se or through another natural or juridical person, business or entity with an interest in the executive agency in which the latter works or has the power to decide or influence, to any person who is a relative of said public official or employee within the fourth degree of consanguinity or the second degree of affinity. When the public official or employee with power to decide or influence believes that it is utterly necessary for the good of public service and the sound operation of the agency, to contract, appoint or promote a relative of his/her[s] within the degree of kinship mentioned above, in a position as public official or employee, [he/she] shall be bound to request a written authorization from the Executive Director of the Government Ethics Office in which he or she states the specific reasons that justify such a contract, appointment or promotion in that specific case, before carrying out such an action, pursuant to the regulations adopted by the Government Ethics Office.</p> <p>The Government Ethics Office shall, within the directive term of thirty (30) days from the date of having filed the request for dispensation, authorize or deny the same. The Government Ethics Office shall notify the person making the request of the approval or denial of the dispensation. In the event the request for dispensation is denied, it shall show the grounds for such a decision by presenting a written report.</p> <p>The prohibition established herein shall not apply in cases in which a public official or employee that appoints or promotes in a career position in the agency in which he/she works or over which he/she exerts jurisdiction, a public official or employee that is his/her relative within the abovementioned degrees, when the appointed or promoted public employee has had the opportunity of competing on an equal footing with other candidates through a selection process based on education and experience tests or evaluations, and it has been objectively determined that he or she is a suitable or the best qualified candidate in the register of eligibles for the position in question and the relative with power has not intervened in the process. Likewise, the prohibitions described above, with the exception of that on appointments, shall apply to those public employees or officials that acquire such a relationship of kinship degree provided for in this act after their appointment or designation.</p> <p>(j) No public official or employee of the Executive Branch may use any representative motifs, emblems, logos, buttons, transfers, stickers, signs, or insignias of any political party or candidate, or identify or promote, directly or indirectly, the electoral interests of any political party or candidate while in the performance of their duties, regardless of the location in which same are rendering their services.</p>

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	<p>TITLE 3. EXECUTIVE; CHAPTER 65. ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT ACT; SUBCHAPTER III. CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE EXECUTIVE, LEGISLATIVE AND JUDICIAL BRANCHES; RESTRICTIONS ON FORMER PUBLIC SERVANTS</p> <p>§ 1823. Prohibitions--Relative to other employment, contracts or business</p> <p>(a) No public official or employee shall accept an employment or maintain contractual or business relationships or responsibilities in addition to those of his public office or employment, whether it is in the Government or in the private sector, which, although legally permitted, has the effect of undermining his freedom of judgment in the performance of his official functions.</p> <p>(b) No public official or employee shall accept employment or maintain contractual business relationships, with a person, business or entity which is regulated by, or does business with the government agency for which he/she works, when the public official or employee participates in institutional decisions of the agency or is empowered to decide or influence the official actions of the agency related to said person, business or entity.</p> <p>(c) No public official or employee who is authorized to contract in the name of the executive agency for which he/she works, shall execute a contract between his agency and an entity or business in which he/she, or any member of his/her family unit, has, or has had, during the last four (4) years before taking office, a direct or indirect pecuniary interest.</p> <p>(d) No executive agency may execute a contract in which any of its officials or employees, or any member of their family units, has or has had, during the last (4) years before taking office, a direct or indirect pecuniary interest, unless the Governor authorizes it, subject to the recommendations of the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Justice.</p> <p>(e) No public official or employee shall be a part of, or have any interest in, the profits or benefits resulting from a contract with any other executive agency or government dependency, unless the Governor expressly authorizes it, subject to the prior recommendation of the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Justice. The contracting may only be executed in a case foreseen by this paragraph, without requesting and obtaining the authorization of the Governor, in the case of:</p> <p>(1) Contracts whose value is not greater than three thousand (3,000) dollars and [which] occur only once in any fiscal year.</p> <p>(2) Lease, exchange, purchase and sale, loan, mortgage insurance or contracts of any other nature that refer to housing and/or a lot provided or to be financed, or whose financing is secured or guaranteed by a government agency.</p> <p>(3) Service, loan, guarantee and incentive programs sponsored by government agencies.</p> <p>In the cases specified in clauses (2) and (3) of this subsection the contracting agency shall authorize the transactions provided the following requirements concur:</p> <p>(A) The contracts, loans, insurance, guarantees or transactions are accessible to any citizen who qualifies therefor.</p> <p>(B) Eligibility requirements are of general application.</p> <p>(C) The public official or employee meets all the eligibility standards and is not granted treatment which is preferential or different from that of the public in general.</p> <p>(f) No public official or employee who is empowered to approve or authorize contracts, shall evaluate, consider, approve or authorize a contract between an executive agency and entity or business in which he/she or any member of his/her family unit has or has had, during the last four (4) years before taking office, a direct or indirect pecuniary interest.</p> <p>(g) No public official or employee shall execute or authorize a contract with a private person knowing that this person, in turn, is representing personal interests in cases or matters which involve a conflict of interest or public policy between the contracting government agency and the personal interests said private person is representing. To those effects, all government agencies shall require all private persons with whom it executes a contract, to include a contractual clause in which said private person certifies that he/she is not involved in a conflict of interest or public policy pursuant to the provisions of this subsection.</p> <p>(h) In every case in which a contract has been executed in violation of the provisions of this section, and once said violations have been indicated by the Director of the Ethics in Government Office, [if] steps have not been taken to obtain a dispensation within ten (10) days following the notice, the contract shall be annulable and the Office of Ethics in Government and the Secretary of Justice are authorized to petition the courts of justice, in representation of the Commonwealth, for said contract [to] be declared null. When a contract is granted without obtaining the dispensation referred to in subsections (d) and (e), or when the same is obtained after the contract is granted, the Director of the Ethics in Government Office may impose a fine on the officials responsible for failing to obtain the dispensation, pursuant to the provisions of §§ 2201 et seq. of this title, part of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Uniform Administrative Procedures Act. The efforts to obtain the dispensation within the ten (10) days following the notification by the Director of a violation to subsections (d) and (e) shall be considered as</p>

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	<p>extenuating circumstances but shall not exempt the officials subject of the deficiency, from liability.</p> <p>(i) The prohibitions set forth in this section shall not apply to contracts executed by any executive agency for the acquisition of literary or artistic property rights, letters or patent to its officers and public employees.</p>
	<p>TITLE 3. EXECUTIVE; CHAPTER 65. ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT ACT; SUBCHAPTER III. CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE EXECUTIVE, LEGISLATIVE AND JUDICIAL BRANCHES; RESTRICTIONS ON FORMER PUBLIC SERVANTS</p> <p>§ 1824. Prohibitions--Related to the representation of private interests in conflict with official functions</p> <p>(a) No public official or employee may represent any private person, whatsoever directly or indirectly, to obtain the approval of an act or ordinance, to obtain a contract, the payment of a claim, a permit, license or authorization, or any other matter, transaction or proposal, if he or any member of his family unit has participated or will participate, or will probably participate in his official capacity in the disposition of the matter. This prohibition shall not apply when dealing with official acts of the public officials or employee within the limits of his authority.</p> <p>(b) No public official or employee shall represent any private person whatsoever, directly or indirectly, before an executive agency, with regard to any claim, permit, license, authorization, matter, transaction or proposal that involves official action on the part of the agency, if he/she, or any member of his/her family unit, possesses executive authority over the agency.</p> <p>(c) No public official or employee shall represent, or otherwise counsel any private person whatsoever, directly or indirectly, before any executive agency, court or other government dependency, in cases and matters related to the Government of Puerto Rico, or in cases or matters that involve conflicts of interest or public policy, between the Government and the interests of said private person.</p> <p>(d) No full-time public official or employee shall, during working hours, represent, counsel or serve as an expert for private entities or persons in litigation, trials, public hearings or in any other matter before the courts of justice, quasi judicial bodies and administrative agencies.</p> <p>(e) For the purposes of this section and § 1827 of this title, the term "matter" means those in which the official or employee has participated personally and substantially, and which occurred through a decision, approval or disapproval, recommendation or advice, or a special investigation involving specific parties. It does not include the participation or intervention of the official or the employee in the promulgation of standards or regulations of general application, or abstract directives and instructions that do not allude to special situations or specific cases.</p>
Rhode Island	<p>§ 36-14-7. Interest in conflict with discharge of duties.</p> <p>(a) A person subject to this code of ethics has an interest which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his or her duties or employment in the public interest and of his or her responsibilities as prescribed in the laws of this state, if he or she has reason to believe or expect that he or she or any person within his or her family or any business associate, or any business by which the person is employed or which the person represents will derive a direct monetary gain or suffer a direct monetary loss, as the case may be, by reason of his or her official activity.</p> <p>(b) A person subject to this code of ethics does not have an interest which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his or her duties in the public interest and of his or her responsibilities as prescribed by the laws of this state, if any benefit or detriment accrues to him or her or any person within his or her family or any business associate, or any business by which the person is employed or which the person represents, as a member of a business, profession, occupation, or group, or of any significant and definable class of persons within the business, profession, occupation, or group, to no greater extent than any other similarly situated member of the business, profession, occupation, or group, or of the significant and definable class of persons within the business, profession, occupation or group.</p>
	<p>§ 36-14-6. Statement of conflict of interest.</p> <p>Any person subject to this code of ethics who, in the discharge of his or her official duties, is or may be required to take an action, make a decision, or refrain therefrom that will or can reasonably be expected to directly result in an economic benefit to the person, or spouse (if not estranged), or any dependent child of the person, or business associate or any business by which the person is employed or which the person represents, shall, before taking any such action or refraining therefrom:</p> <p>(1) Prepare a written statement sworn to under the penalties for perjury describing the matter requiring action and the nature of the potential conflict; if he or she is a member of a legislative body and he or she does not request that he or she be excused from voting, deliberating, or</p>

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	<p>taking action on the matter, the statement shall state why, despite the potential conflict, he or she is able to vote and otherwise participate fairly, objectively, and in the public interest; and</p> <p>(2) Deliver a copy of the statement to the commission, and:</p> <p>(i) If he or she is a member of the general assembly or of any city or town legislative body, he or she shall deliver a copy of the statement to the presiding officer of the body, who shall cause the statement to be recorded in the journal of the body and, upon request of the member, may excuse the member from votes, deliberations, or any other action on the matter on which a potential conflict exists; or</p> <p>(ii) If the person is not a legislator, his or her superior, if any, shall, if reasonably possible, assign the matter to another person who does not have a conflict of interest. If he or she has no immediate superior, he or she shall take such steps as the commission shall prescribe through rules or regulations to remove him or herself from influence over any action on the matter on which the conflict of interest exists.</p>
South Carolina	<p>§ 8-13-100. Definitions</p> <p>(11) (a) "Economic interest" means an interest distinct from that of the general public in a purchase, sale, lease, contract, option, or other transaction or arrangement involving property or services in which a public official, public member, or public employee may gain an economic benefit of fifty dollars or more.</p> <p>(b) This definition does not prohibit a public official, public member, or public employee from participating in, voting on, or influencing or attempting to influence an official decision if the only economic interest or reasonably foreseeable benefit that may accrue to the public official, public member, or public employee is incidental to the public official's, public member's, or public employee's position or which accrues to the public official, public member, or public employee as a member of a profession, occupation, or large class to no greater extent than the economic interest or potential benefit could reasonably be foreseen to accrue to all other members of the profession, occupation, or large class.</p>
	<p>§ 8-13-700. Use of official position or office for financial gain; disclosure of potential conflict of interest.</p> <p>(A) No public official, public member, or public employee may knowingly use his official office, membership, or employment to obtain an economic interest for himself, a member of his immediate family, an individual with whom he is associated, or a business with which he is associated. This prohibition does not extend to the incidental use of public materials, personnel, or equipment, subject to or available for a public official's, public member's, or public employee's use which does not result in additional public expense.</p> <p>(B) No public official, public member, or public employee may make, participate in making, or in any way attempt to use his office, membership, or employment to influence a governmental decision in which he, a member of his immediate family, an individual with whom he is associated, or a business with which he is associated has an economic interest. A public official, public member, or public employee who, in the discharge of his official responsibilities, is required to take an action or make a decision which affects an economic interest of himself, a member of his immediate family, an individual with whom he is associated, or a business with which he is associated shall:</p> <p>(1) prepare a written statement describing the matter requiring action or decisions and the nature of his potential conflict of interest with respect to the action or decision;</p> <p>(2) if the public official is a member of the General Assembly, he shall deliver a copy of the statement to the presiding officer of the appropriate house. The presiding officer shall have the statement printed in the appropriate journal and require that the member of the General Assembly be excused from votes, deliberations, and other action on the matter on which a potential conflict exists;</p> <p>(3) if he is a public employee, he shall furnish a copy of the statement to his superior, if any, who shall assign the matter to another employee who does not have a potential conflict of interest. If he has no immediate superior, he shall take the action prescribed by the State Ethics Commission;</p> <p>(4) if he is a public official, other than a member of the General Assembly, he shall furnish a copy of the statement to the presiding officer of the governing body of any agency, commission, board, or of any county, municipality, or a political subdivision thereof, on which he serves, who shall cause the statement to be printed in the minutes and require that the member be excused from any votes, deliberations, and other actions on the matter on which the potential conflict of interest exists and shall cause the disqualification and the reasons for it to be noted in the minutes;</p> <p>(5) if he is a public member, he shall furnish a copy to the presiding officer of any agency, commission, board, or of any county, municipality, or a political subdivision thereof, on which he serves, who shall cause the statement to be printed in the minutes and shall require that the member be excused from any votes, deliberations, and other actions on</p>

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	<p>the matter on which the potential conflict of interest exists and shall cause such disqualification and the reasons for it to be noted in the minutes.</p> <p>(C) Where a public official, public member, or public employee or a member of his immediate family holds an economic interest in a blind trust, he is not considered to have a conflict of interest with regard to matters pertaining to that economic interest, if the existence of the blind trust has been disclosed to the appropriate supervisory office.</p> <p>(D) The provisions of this section do not apply to any court in the unified judicial system.</p> <p>(E) When a member of the General Assembly is required by law to appear because of his business interest as an owner or officer of the business or in his official capacity as a member of the General Assembly, this section does not apply.</p>
South Dakota	<p>Sout Dakota Constitution, Art. III, § 12....</p> <p>[N]or shall any member of the Legislature during the term for which he shall have been elected, or within one year thereafter, be interested, directly or indirectly, in any contract with the state or any county thereof, authorized by any law passed during the term for which he shall have been elected.</p>
Tennessee	<p>§ 8-50-502. Disclosure statements -- Contents.</p> <p>Legislators must file a Conflict of Interest Disclosure statement that meets the following requirements:</p> <p>Disclosure shall be made of:</p> <p>(1) The major source or sources of private income of more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000), including, but not limited to, offices, directorships, and salaried employments of the person making disclosure, the spouse, or minor children residing with such person, but no dollar amounts need be stated. This subdivision (1) shall not be construed to require the disclosure of any client list or customer list;</p> <p>(2) Any investment which the person making disclosure, that person's spouse, or minor children residing with that person has in any corporation or other business organization in excess of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) or five percent (5%) of the total capital; however, it shall not be necessary to state specific dollar amounts or percentages of such investments;</p> <p>(3) Any person, firm, or organization for whom compensated lobbying is done by any associate of the person making disclosure, that person's spouse, or minor children residing with the person making disclosure, or any firm in which the person making disclosure or they hold any interest, complete to include the terms of any such employment and the measure or measures to be supported or opposed;</p> <p>(4) In general terms by areas of the client's interest, the entities to which professional services, such as those of an attorney, accountant, or architect, are furnished by the person making disclosure or that person's spouse;</p> <p>(5) By any member of the general assembly, the amount and source, by name, or any contributions from private sources for use in defraying the expenses necessarily related to the adequate performance of that member's legislative duties. The expenditure of campaign funds by an officeholder for the furtherance of the office of the officeholder shall be considered as an expenditure under title 2, chapter 10, and such expenditures need not be reported under the provisions of this chapter;</p> <p>(6) Any retainer fee which the person making the disclosure receives from any person, firm, or organization who is in the practice of promoting or opposing, influencing or attempting to influence, directly or indirectly, the passage or defeat of any legislation before the general assembly, the legislative committees, or the members to such entities;</p> <p>(7) Any adjudication of bankruptcy or discharge received in any United States district court within five (5) years of the date of the disclosure;</p> <p>(8) Any loan or combination of loans of more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) from the same source made in the previous calendar year to the person making disclosure or to the spouse or minor children unless:</p> <p>(A) The loan is from an immediate family member;</p> <p>(B) The loan is from a financial institution whose deposits are insured by an entity of the federal government, or such loan is made in accordance with existing law and is made in the ordinary course of business. A loan is made in the ordinary course of business if the lender is in the business of making loans, and the loan bears the usual and customary interest rate of the lender for the category of loan involved, is made on a basis which assures repayment, is evidenced by a written instrument, and is subject to a due date or amortization schedule;</p> <p>(C) The loan is secured by a recorded security interest in collateral, bears the usual and customary interest rate of the lender for the category of loan involved, is made on a basis which assures repayment, is evidenced by a written instrument, and is subject to a due date or amortization schedule;</p> <p>(D) The loan is from a partnership in which the legislator has at least ten percent (10%) partnership interest; or</p>

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	<p>(E) The loan is from a corporation in which more than fifty percent (50%) of the outstanding voting shares are owned by the person making disclosure or by a member of such person's immediate family.</p> <p>As used in this subdivision (8), "immediate family member" means a spouse, parent, sibling or child; and</p> <p>(9) Such additional information as the person making disclosure might desire.</p>
	<p>Senate Code of Ethics, Article 2</p> <p>Section 1. A Senator has a personal interest that conflicts with the proper discharge of the Senator's duties if:</p> <p>(a) The Senator has reason to believe or expect that he or she will derive a direct monetary gain or any other advantage or suffer a direct monetary loss by reason of his or her official activity;</p> <p>(b) The Senator is employed by a business entity that employs a lobbyist who seeks to influence legislative action regarding a matter before the Senate or any committee thereof; or</p> <p>(c) The immediate family, as defined in T.C.A. Section 3-6-301(12), of the Senator is a lobbyist employed to influence legislative action regarding a matter before the Senate or any committee thereof.</p> <p>Section 2: ... (b) No Senator shall violate the provisions of T.C.A. Sections 2-10-123, 3-6-304, 3-6-305, or 39-16-102, nor shall any Senator otherwise misuse the Senator's office for personal financial gain.</p> <p>(i) No Senator shall use the Senator's office either to grant or to obtain special privilege, exemption, or preferential treatment to or for him or herself.</p>
Texas	<p>GOVERNMENT CODE; CHAPTER 572. PERSONAL FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE, STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST</p> <p>§ 572.005. Determination of Substantial Interest.</p> <p>An individual has a substantial interest in a business entity if the individual:</p> <p>(1) has a controlling interest in the business entity;</p> <p>(2) owns more than 10 percent of the voting interest in the business entity;</p> <p>(3) owns more than \$25,000 of the fair market value of the business entity;</p> <p>(4) has a direct or indirect participating interest by shares, stock, or otherwise, regardless of whether voting rights are included, in more than 10 percent of the profits, proceeds, or capital gains of the business entity;</p> <p>(5) is a member of the board of directors or other governing board of the business entity;</p> <p>(6) serves as an elected officer of the business entity; or</p> <p>(7) is an employee of the business entity.</p>
Utah	<p>§ 76-8-109. Failure of member of Legislature to disclose interest in measure or bill.</p> <p>(a) "Conflict of interest" means an action that is taken by a regulated officeholder that the officeholder reasonably believes may cause direct financial benefit or detriment to the officeholder, a member of the officeholder's immediate family, or an entity that the officeholder is required to disclose under the provisions of this section, and that benefit or detriment is distinguishable from the effects of that action on the public or on the officeholder's profession, occupation, or association generally.</p>
Vermont	<p>Senate Rule 71.</p> <p>No senator shall be permitted to vote upon any question in which he or she is directly or immediately interested.</p>
	<p>House Rule 75.</p> <p>Members shall not be permitted to vote upon any question in which they are immediately or directly interested.</p>
Virginia	<p>General Assembly. § 30-101. Definitions.</p> <p>"Personal interest" means a financial benefit or liability accruing to a legislator or to a member of his immediate family. Such interest shall exist by reason of (i) ownership in a business if the ownership interest exceeds three percent of the total equity of the business; (ii) annual income that exceeds, or may reasonably be anticipated to exceed, \$ 10,000 from ownership in real or personal property or a business; (iii) salary, other compensation, fringe benefits, or benefits from the use of property, or any combination thereof, paid or provided by a business that exceeds, or may reasonably be anticipated to exceed, \$ 10,000 annually; (iv) ownership of real or personal</p>

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	<p>property if the interest exceeds \$ 10,000 in value and excluding ownership in a business, income, or salary, other compensation, fringe benefits or benefits from the use of property; or (v) personal liability incurred or assumed on behalf of a business if the liability exceeds three percent of the asset value of the business.</p> <p>"Personal interest in a contract" means a personal interest which a legislator has in a contract with a governmental agency, whether due to his being a party to the contract or due to a personal interest in a business which is a party to the contract.</p> <p>"Contract" means any agreement to which a governmental agency is a party, or any agreement on behalf of a governmental agency which involves the payment of money appropriated by the General Assembly or a political subdivision, whether or not such agreement is executed in the name of the Commonwealth of Virginia, or some political subdivision thereof. "Contract" includes a subcontract only when the contract of which it is a part is with the legislator's own governmental agency.</p> <p>"Personal interest in a transaction" means a personal interest of a legislator in any matter considered by the General Assembly. Such personal interest exists when an officer or employee or a member of his immediate family has a personal interest in property or a business, or represents any individual or business and such property, business or represented individual or business (i) is the subject of the transaction or (ii) may realize a reasonably foreseeable direct or indirect benefit or detriment as a result of the action of the agency considering the transaction. A "personal interest in a transaction" exists only if the legislator or member of his immediate family or an individual or business represented by the legislator is affected in a way that is substantially different from the general public or from persons comprising a profession, occupation, trade, business or other comparable and generally recognizable class or group of which he or the individual or business he represents is a member.</p> <p>"Transaction" means any matter considered by the General Assembly, whether in a committee, subcommittee, or other entity of the General Assembly or before the General Assembly itself, on which official action is taken or contemplated.</p>
	<p>Senate Rule 36.</p> <p>Every Senator present in the Chamber, when any question is put or vote taken, shall vote or be counted as voting on one side or the other, except in the case of pairs, as hereinafter provided. A Senator who has a personal interest in the transaction, as defined in § 30-101 of the Code of Virginia, shall neither vote nor be counted upon it, and he shall withdraw, or invoke this rule not to be counted, prior to the division and the fact shall be recorded on the voting machine. If a Senator invokes this rule, the Senator shall not participate, directly or indirectly, in the matter wherein the rule is invoked.</p>
	<p>House Rule 69.</p> <p>Upon a division of the House on any question, a member who is present and fails to vote shall on the demand of any member be counted on the negative of the question and when the yeas and nays are taken shall, in addition, be entered on the Journal as present and not voting. However, no member who has an immediate and personal interest in the result of the question shall either vote or be counted upon it...</p>
Washington	<p>§ 42.52.020. Activities incompatible with public duties.</p> <p>No state officer or state employee may have an interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or engage in a business or transaction or professional activity, or incur an obligation of any nature, that is in conflict with the proper discharge of the state officer's or state employee's official duties.</p>
	<p>§ 42.52.030.</p> <p>(1) No state officer or state employee, except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, may be beneficially interested, directly or indirectly, in a contract, sale, lease, purchase, or grant that may be made by, through, or is under the supervision of the officer or employee, in whole or in part, or accept, directly or indirectly, any compensation, gratuity, or reward from any other person beneficially interested in the contract, sale, lease, purchase, or grant.</p> <p>(2) No state officer or state employee may participate in a transaction involving the state in his or her official capacity with a person of which the officer or employee is an officer, agent, employee, or member, or in which the officer or employee owns a beneficial interest, except that an officer or employee of an institution of higher education or the "Spokane intercollegiate research and technology institute may serve as an officer, agent, employee, or member, or on the board of directors, board of trustees, advisory board, or committee or review panel for any nonprofit institute, foundation, or fund-raising entity; and may serve as a member of an advisory board, committee, or review panel for a governmental or other nonprofit entity.</p>
West Virginia	6B-2-5 (d). Interests in public contracts. --

STATES	TITLE
	<p>(1) In addition to the provisions of section fifteen, article ten, chapter sixty-one of this code, no elected or appointed public official or public employee or member of his or her immediate family or business with which he or she is associated may be a party to or have an interest in the profits or benefits of a contract which the official or employee may have direct authority to enter into, or over which he or she may have control: <i>Provided</i>, That nothing herein shall be construed to prevent or make unlawful the employment of any person with any governmental body: <i>Provided, however</i>, That nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit a member of the Legislature from entering into a contract with any governmental body, or prohibit a part-time appointed public official from entering into a contract which the part-time appointed public official may have direct authority to enter into or over which he or she may have control when the official has not participated in the review or evaluation thereof, has been recused from deciding or evaluating and has been excused from voting on the contract and has fully disclosed the extent of his or her interest in the contract.</p> <p>(2) In the absence of bribery or a purpose to defraud, an elected or appointed public official or public employee or a member of his or her immediate family or a business with which he or she is associated shall not be considered as having a prohibited financial interest in a public contract when such a person has a limited interest as an owner, shareholder or creditor of the business which is awarded a public contract. A limited interest for the purposes of this subsection is:</p> <p>(A) An interest which does not exceed one thousand dollars in the profits or benefits of the public contract or contracts in a calendar year;</p> <p>(B) An interest as a creditor of a public employee or official who exercises control over the contract, or a member of his or her immediate family, if the amount is less than five thousand dollars.</p> <p>(3) If a public official or employee has an interest in the profits or benefits of a contract, then he or she may not make, participate in making, or in any way attempt to use his office or employment to influence a government decision affecting his or her financial or limited financial interest. Public officials shall also comply with the voting rules prescribed in subsection (j) of this section.</p> <p>(4) Where the provisions of subdivisions (1) and (2) of this subsection would result in the loss of a quorum in a public body or agency, in excessive cost, undue hardship, or other substantial interference with the operation of a state, county, municipality, county school board or other governmental agency, the affected governmental body or agency may make written application to the Ethics Commission for an exemption from subdivisions (1) and (2) of this subsection.</p>
	<p>6B-2-5. (j) Limitations on Voting.</p> <p>(1) Public officials, excluding members of the Legislature who are governed by subsection (i) of this section, may not vote on a matter:</p> <p>(A) In which they, an immediate family member, or a business with which they or an immediate family member is associated have a financial interest. Business with which they are associated means a business of which the person or an immediate family member is a director, officer, owner, employee, compensated agent, or holder of stock which constitutes five percent or more of the total outstanding stocks of any class.</p> <p>(B) If a public official is employed by a financial institution and his or her primary responsibilities include consumer and commercial lending, the public official may not vote on a matter which directly affects the financial interests of a customer of the financial institution if the public official is directly involved in approving a loan request from the person or business appearing before the governmental body or if the public official has been directly involved in approving a loan for that person or business within the past 12 months: <i>Provided</i>, That this limitation only applies if the total amount of the loan or loans exceeds fifteen thousand dollars.</p> <p>(C) A personnel matter involving the public official's spouse or relative;</p> <p>(D) The appropriations of public moneys or the awarding of a contract to a nonprofit corporation if the public official or an immediate family member is employed by the nonprofit.</p> <p>(II) A public official may vote:</p> <p>(A) If the public official, his or her spouse, immediate family members or relatives or business with which they are associated are affected as a member of, and to no greater extent than any other member of a profession, occupation, class of persons or class of businesses. A class shall consist of not fewer than five similarly situated persons or businesses; or</p> <p>(B) If the matter affects a publicly traded company when: (i) The public official, or dependent family members individually or jointly own less than five percent of the issued stock in the publicly traded company and the value of the stocks individually or jointly owned is less than ten thousand dollars; and (ii) Prior to casting a vote the public official discloses his or her interest in the publicly traded company.</p> <p>(3) For a public official's recusal to be effective, it is necessary to excuse him or herself from participating in the discussion and decision-making process by physically removing him or herself from the room during the period, fully disclosing his or her interests, and recusing him or herself from voting on the issue.</p> <p>See also Title 58, Legislative Rule of the Ethics Commission, Series 8, Interest in Public Contracts.</p>
Wisconsin	§ 19.45. Standards of conduct; state public officials.

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	<p>(1) The legislature hereby reaffirms that a state public official holds his or her position as a public trust, and any effort to realize substantial personal gain through official conduct is a violation of that trust...The legislature further recognizes that in a representative democracy, the representatives are drawn from society and, therefore, cannot and should not be without all personal and economic interest in the decisions and policies of government; that citizens who serve as state public officials retain their rights as citizens to interests of a personal or economic nature; that standards of ethical conduct for state public officials need to distinguish between those minor and inconsequential conflicts that are unavoidable in a free society, and those conflicts which are substantial and material; and that state public officials may need to engage in employment, professional or business activities, other than official duties, in order to support themselves or their families and to maintain a continuity of professional or business activity, or may need to maintain investments, which activities or investments do not conflict with the specific provisions of this subchapter.</p> <p>(2) No state public official may use his or her public position or office to obtain financial gain or anything of substantial value for the private benefit of himself or herself or his or her immediate family, or for an organization with which he or she is associated. This subsection does not prohibit a state public official from using the title or prestige of his or her office to obtain contributions permitted and reported as required by ch. 11.</p> <p>(5) No state public official may use or attempt to use the public position held by the public official to influence or gain unlawful benefits, advantages or privileges personally or for others....</p> <p>(13) No state public official or candidate for state public office may, directly or by means of an agent, give, or offer or promise to give, or withhold, or offer or promise to withhold, his or her vote or influence, or promise to take or refrain from taking official action with respect to any proposed or pending matter in consideration of, or upon condition that, any other person make or refrain from making a political contribution, or provide or refrain from providing any service or other thing of value, to or for the benefit of a candidate, a political party, any person who is subject to a registration requirement under s. 11.05, or any person making a communication that contains a reference to a clearly identified state public official holding an elective office or to a candidate for state public office.</p>
	<p>§ 19.46. Conflict of interest prohibited; exception.</p> <p>(1) Except in accordance with the boards advice under s. 5.05 (6a) and except as otherwise provided in sub. (3), no state public official may:</p> <p>(a) Take any official action substantially affecting a matter in which the official, a member of his or her immediate family, or an organization with which the official is associated has a substantial financial interest.</p> <p>(b) Use his or her office or position in a way that produces or assists in the production of a substantial benefit, direct or indirect, for the official, one or more members of the officials immediate family either separately or together, or an organization with which the official is associated.</p>
	<p>§ 19.42</p> <p>(2) "Associated", when used with reference to an organization, includes any organization in which an individual or a member of his or her immediate family is a director, officer or trustee, or owns or controls, directly or indirectly, and severally or in the aggregate, at least 10% of the outstanding equity or of which an individual or a member of his or her immediate family is an authorized representative or agent.</p>
Wyoming	<p>§ 6-5-101.</p> <p>"Pecuniary benefit" is benefit in the form of property, but does not include: Property with a value of less than twenty dollars (\$20.00); Food or drink or entertainment authorized as a proper deductible expense for income tax purposes under the United States Internal Revenue Code up to an amount of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per year; or Contributions to a political campaign of a public servant as provided in W.S. 22-25-102.</p>
	<p>§ 6-5-103. Compensation for past official behavior; penalties. A person commits an offense if he solicits, accepts or agrees to accept any pecuniary benefit as compensation for having, as a public servant, given a decision or vote favorable to another, or for having otherwise exercised a discretion in his favor, or for having violated his statutory duties. For purposes of this section, "compensation" does not include mere acceptance of an offer of employment.</p>
	<p>§ 6-5-106. Conflict of interest; penalties; disclosure of interest and withdrawal from participation.</p> <p>(a) Except as provided by subsection (b) of this section, a public servant commits an offense if he requests or receives any pecuniary benefit, other than lawful compensation, on any contract, or for the letting of any contract, or making any appointment where the government employing or subject to the discretion or decisions of the public servant is concerned.</p> <p>(b) If any public servant discloses the nature and extent of his pecuniary interest to all parties concerned therewith and does not participate during the considerations and vote thereon and does not attempt to influence any of the parties and does not act for the governing body with</p>

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	<p>respect to the contracts or appointments, then the acts are not unlawful under subsection (a) of this section. Subsection (a) of this section does not apply to the operation, administration, inspection or performance of banking and deposit contracts or relationships after the selection of a depository.</p> <p>(c) Violation of subsection (a) of this section is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00).</p>
Virgin Islands	<p>TITLE THREE Executive; Chapter 37. Conflicts of Interest § 1103. Substantial conflict of interest.</p> <p>A person subject to this chapter has an interest which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his duties in the public interest and of his responsibilities as prescribed in the laws of the Virgin Islands or a personal interest, arising from any situation, within the scope of this chapter, if he will derive a direct monetary gain or suffer a direct monetary loss, as the case may be, by reason of his official activity. He does not have an interest which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his duties in the public interest and of his responsibilities as prescribed by the laws of the Virgin Islands or a personal interest, arising from any situation, within the scope of this chapter, if any benefit or detriment accrues to him as a member of an industry, profession, occupation, or group to no greater extent than any other member of such business, profession, occupation, or group.</p>
	<p>TITLE THREE Executive; Chapter 37. Conflicts of Interest § 1104. Remote interest</p> <p>(a) A territorial officer or employee shall not be deemed to be interested in a contract entered into by a public agency of which he is a member within the meaning of this chapter if he has only a remote interest in the contract and if the fact of such interest is disclosed to the public agency of which he is a member and noted in its official records, and thereafter the public agency authorizes, approves, or ratifies the contract in good faith.</p> <p>(b) As used in this chapter "remote interest" means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) that of a nonsalaried officer or a nonprofit organization; (2) that of a former employee or agency of a party contracting with the government, if the territorial officer or employee was an employee or agent of said contracting party for at least three (3) years prior to his initially becoming a territorial officer or employee. Time of employment with the contracting party shall be counted in computing the three (3) year period even though such contracting party has been converted from one form of business organization to a different form of business organization within the three (3) years of the initial taking of office by such territorial officer or employee. Time of employment in such case shall be counted only if, after the transfer or change in organization, the real or ultimate ownership of the contracting party is the same or substantially similar to that which existed before such transfer or change in organization. Stock holders, bond holders, partners, or other persons holding an interest in the contracting party are regarded as having the "real or ultimate ownership" of such contracting party. (3) that of a parent in the earnings of his minor child for personal services. (4) that of a landlord or tenant of the party contracting with the government. (5) that of an attorney of the party contracting with the government but not representing the contracting party in negotiating with the government. (6) that of a former supplier of goods or services to a party contracting with the government when such goods or services were supplied to the contracting party by the territorial officer or employee for at least five (5) years prior to his election or appointment to a territorial office or employment. <p>(c) The provisions of this section shall not be applicable to any territorial officer or employee interested in a contract who influences or attempts to influence another member of a public agency of which he is a member to enter into the contract.</p> <p>(d) The willful failure of a territorial officer or employee to disclose the fact of his interest in a contract pursuant to this section shall be punishable as provided in this chapter. Such violation shall not void the contract, however, unless the contracting party had knowledge of the fact of the remote interest of the officer at the time the contract was executed.</p> <p>(e) A territorial officer or employee shall not be deemed to be interested in a contract made pursuant to competitive bidding under a procedure established by law if his sole interest is that of an officer, director, or employee or a bank or financial institution with which a party to the contract has the relationship of borrower or depositor or creditor.</p>

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Alaska State Legislature

Select Committee on Legislative Ethics

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April 23, 2004

ADVISORY OPINION 2004-02

RE: You have asked the committee to advise you in regard to the following:

1. Whether there are any restrictions under the legislative ethics code on a legislator with a financial interest in legislation who takes the following actions in regard to that legislation: introducing, sponsoring, amending a bill, chairing a committee considering a bill, discussing and voting on the bill while in committee, and then finally voting on the bill on the floor of the House or Senate?
2. Whether a legislator has a conflict under the legislative ethics code if the legislator is employed in the private sector, is a member of a Native corporation, is a board member of a for profit or non-profit corporation that receives government funds or holds a natural resources lease, or receives an Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend?
3. How should teachers, fishermen, businessmen, lawyers, real estate agents, loggers, doctors, etc., deal with legislation that may present potential conflicts?
4. If Alaska truly has a citizen legislature, is it not advantageous to have resident experts in various fields actively participating in legislation?

You are a legislator and therefore covered by the legislative ethics code. You have requested an advisory opinion concerning facts and circumstances that you have related. The committee relies on facts that you have described in answering your questions. You have waived your right to confidentiality under AS 24.60.160(b).

Statement of Facts

In the first question you state that you have a financial interest in a piece of legislation. This financial interest is not described any further. In the second question you describe several types of financial interests: employment in the private sector, membership in a Native corporation, board member of a for-profit or non-profit corporation that receives government funds or holds a natural resources lease, receiving an Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend. In the third question you provide several professions for consideration: teacher, fisherman, businessman, lawyer, real estate agent, logger or doctor. The fourth question, regarding the advantages of a citizen legislature, is rhetorical.

Discussion

Uniform Rule 34(b)

As a legislator, one of your tasks is to introduce, discuss, and vote on legislation. The Uniform Rules of the Legislature require all legislators present to vote on final passage of a bill unless the house allows the legislator to abstain from a vote.¹ Uniform Rule 34(b). While a member may request to abstain from voting, commonly for a declared conflict of interest, the custom is for the body not to allow an abstention. Without the body's unanimous consent to abstention, the legislator must vote on a bill or resolution under the Uniform Rules. Note that while Uniform Rule 34(b) clearly applies to votes before the full body, committees typically adhere to the Uniform Rules to the extent the Rules can apply in the less formal committee situation.

AS 24.60.030(g)

The legislative ethics code requires a legislator not to vote if the legislator has a substantial interest in a "business, investment, real property, lease or other enterprise" and if "the effect on that interest of the action to be voted on is greater than the effect on a substantial class of persons to which the legislator belongs as a member of a profession, occupation, industry, or region."² AS 24.60.030(g).

This subsection requires a fact specific inquiry in each case to consider the effect of a bill and compare the legislator's interest with the interests of a substantial class of persons to which the legislator belongs.³

Each fact situation will be different depending on the kind and extent of interest held by the legislator and the particular bill up for a vote. If you think that you have a substantial interest in an enterprise and that your interest is different and more substantial than a large class of persons to which you belong, the ethics code prohibits a vote unless the Uniform Rules require a vote. If you have a substantial interest in regard to a bill the proper procedure would be to ask the house or committee for permission to abstain from voting, briefly describing the fact situation leading to your conclusion that AS 24.60.030(g) prohibits you from voting. If the body does not permit you to abstain, then you must vote, and you will not have violated AS 24.60.030(g). If you do not ask for an abstention, and you do have a substantial interest described in AS 24.60.030(g), you could be found to have violated that portion of the ethics code.

Further guidance to distinguish between a "financial interest" which does not trigger the application of AS 24.60.030(g) and a "substantial interest" is found in AS 24.60.990(b) which states:

- (b) A person has a substantial interest in legislative, administrative, or political action if the person
 - (1) is not a natural person and will be directly and substantially affected financially by a legislative, administrative, or political action;
 - (2) is a natural person and will be directly and substantially affected financially by a legislative, administrative, or political action in a way that is greater than the effect on a substantial class of persons to which the person belongs as a member of a profession, occupation, industry, or region;
 - (3) has or seeks contracts in excess of \$10,000 annually for goods or services with the legislature or with an agency of the state; or
 - (4) is a lobbyist.

For the purpose of this subsection, the state, the federal government, and an agency, corporation, or other entity of or owned by the state or federal government do not have a substantial interest in legislative, administrative, or political action.

Paragraph (1) refers to corporations or other entities that are not actual human beings, so will not apply to you as a legislator. As you can see, paragraph (2) mirrors the language used in AS 24.60.030 (g) to determine whether a significant interest exists. Paragraph (3) sets a bright-line standard, if a legislator has a contract for goods or services in excess of \$10,000 with the legislature or a state agency, the legislator would be considered to have a substantial interest in related legislation.

Paragraph (4) states that lobbyists are always considered to have substantial interest in legislation; since a legislator cannot be a lobbyist, this is not relevant.

Another provision of the legislative ethics code might apply when a legislator has a financial interest in regard to legislative actions by the legislator under the ethics code. AS 24.60.030(e)(1)⁴ states that "a legislator may not directly . . . agree to . . . take or withhold legislative action . . . including support or opposition to a bill as a result of . . . [another] person's decision to . . . provide . . . a thing of value [to the legislator]." "A thing of value" can include payment of a salary.⁵ A person accepting a salary from an employer can be considered to have accepted a thing of value from that employer.

In order to find a violation of this subsection there must also be evidence that, in return for the thing of value, the legislator is agreeing to influence legislation. There must be direct or indirect evidence of wrongful motivation of the legislator. The legislator's acceptance of a salary or other thing of value is not sufficient. Proving a specific intent to do something wrong is difficult but not impossible.

Specific intent is a common element in proving the commission of a crime and must be supported by evidence. In the event that the committee found evidence of a legislator's wrongful intent to influence legislation when accepting a thing of value, that legislator could be found to have violated the legislative ethics code under AS 24.60.030(e)(1).

Based on the above general discussion, each separate question you raise will be considered.

1. Whether there are any restrictions under the ethics code on a legislator with a financial interest in legislation who takes the following actions in regard to that legislation: introducing, sponsoring, amending a bill, chairing a committee considering a bill, discussing and voting on the bill while in committee, and then finally voting on the bill on the floor of the House or Senate.

AS 24.60.030(g)

The general discussion above describes the procedure to use in regard to voting on legislation where a financial interest you hold and a particular bill presents you with a substantial conflict or appearance of a conflict of interest between your duties as a legislator and your personal financial interest. The ethics code requires taking action to avoid voting only where the legislator has a substantial interest in an enterprise and the effect of the legislation would be greater on the legislator than the effect on others also holding a financial interest in the enterprise. The committee finds that AS 24.60.030(g) requires a legislator to declare a substantial financial interest in a matter up for vote on the floor of either chamber, and to request to abstain from a vote. If the legislator is required to vote by the body under the Uniform Rules, then there will be no violation of AS 24.60.030(g).

Application of AS 24.60.030(g) to actions other than voting

The committee finds that AS 24.60.030(g) should not be applied to legislative actions other than voting. The language of AS 24.60.030(g) only mentions voting, and does not include "introducing, sponsoring, amending a bill, chairing a committee considering a bill, [and] discussing . . . the bill while in committee." This opinion will not apply that subsection to any actions other than voting. If the legislature wishes to expand this prohibition beyond voting, it may change the language of AS 24.60.030(g) to more be more expansive.

Application of AS 24.60.030(g) to voting in committee

The committee also finds for purposes of this opinion that AS 24.60.030(g) should not be applied to voting in committees.⁶ AS 24.60.030(g) requires a legislator not to vote on a matter unless required to vote by the Uniform Rules. The committee finds the application of this subsection to be limited to voting situations where the Uniform Rules are being strictly used. As discussed below, the committee finds that the practice of legislative committees is to not follow Uniform Rule 34(b) when a member declares a conflict. Rather than going through the process of asking to be excused from voting, committee members typically vote after declaring a conflict. If the committee found that AS 24.60.030(g) applied to voting in committees, its effect would be to impose application of Uniform Rule 34(b) on the committee process. The committee finds that the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics is not the appropriate forum to determine which Uniform Rules apply or do not apply to legislative committees.

Uniform rules of procedure are required to be adopted by both houses at the beginning of each legislative session.⁷ The Alaska State Legislature Uniform Rules provide that in the event the Uniform Rules do not cover a situation, Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure shall apply.⁸ While the application of Uniform Rule 34(b) is regularly and uniformly applied on the floor, in committee discussion it became apparent that its application is not uniform in committees. Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure provides in section 632 that the rules of procedure in committees are the same as the rules of the body insofar as conditions permit, but that the rules limiting debate should be relaxed.⁹

It is the practice in committee, to require members to vote, despite notice that a member has a conflict described in AS 24.60.030(g). It is also the practice not to require a committee member to make a formal motion to be excused from voting under Uniform Rule 34(b) every time a vote is about to be taken. The legislative members of the committee stated that once a conflict is stated, it was not the practice to require a member to restate the conflict and ask to be excused from voting on every subsequent vote and in every subsequent committee. Requiring the strict application of AS 24.60.030(g) and Uniform Rule 34(b) to votes in committee would alter current committee practice.

Considering current practice, and the language of AS 24.60.030(g) which does not clearly apply to committees, the committee declines to extend the application of AS 24.60.030(g) to voting in committees.

AS 24.60.030(e)(1)

AS 24.60.030(e)(1) prohibits a legislator from taking legislative action such as supporting or opposing a bill in exchange for something of value. Support or opposition to a bill would include voting on a bill on the floor as well as, introducing, sponsoring and amending a bill, chairing a committee considering a bill, discussing and voting on a bill while in committee.

Any financial interest accepted with the intent to influence legislation is prohibited under AS 24.60.030(e)(1). But other than accepting something of value in exchange for agreeing to influence legislation, there are no prohibitions in the legislative ethics code¹⁰ on a legislator, other than voting on the floor under AS 24.60.030(g), against introducing, carrying or taking other actions to support or oppose legislation in which a legislator has a financial interest.

2. In the second question you describe several types of financial interests: employment in the private sector, membership in a native corporation,¹¹ board member of a for profit or non-profit corporation that receives government funds or holds a natural resources lease, receiving an Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend.

Because AS 24.60.030(a) prohibits acceptance of any benefit other than official compensation for performing your legislative duties, you should strictly separate the work that you are otherwise compensated for in your private life from your actions as a public official.

The previous general discussion and the discussion in regard to question one should provide you with general guidance. Each of these personal financial interests may be the same as "a substantial class of persons to which the legislator belongs as a member of a profession, occupation, industry, or region" and therefore will not trigger the prohibition found in AS 24.60.030(g) on voting. Without specific facts the committee cannot advise you in regard to the application of the ethics code to a particular situation.

3. In the third question you provide several professions for consideration: if a legislator is a teacher, fisherman, businessman, lawyer, real estate agent, logger or doctor how would the legislator act in regard to potential conflicts.

If a legislator is a doctor, for example, and if in regard to a particular bill, the legislator's interest is no more specific or different from all other doctors, then the legislator would not seem to be subject to the ethical restriction on voting imposed by AS 24.60.030(g). If a legislator/doctor's specialty as a naturopath is particularly affected by a bill, such as a bill not allowing naturopaths to practice, then it is possible that AS 24.60.030(g) requires the legislator to abstain from any legislative action supporting or opposing the bill. See the general discussion and previous answers to questions you have asked.

4. The fourth question is rhetorical question regarding the advantages of a citizen legislature.

Because this does not ask an ethics question, it will not be responded to in this opinion. The committee notes that AS 24.60.010 does state that the public has committed to a part-time citizen legislature and that legislators are expected and permitted to earn outside income, but also finds that:

- (1) high moral and ethical standards among public servants in the legislative branch of government are essential to assure the trust, respect, and confidence of the people of this state;
- (2) a fair and open government requires that legislators and legislative employees conduct the public's business in a manner that preserves the integrity of the legislative process and avoids conflicts of interest or even appearances of conflicts of interest.

Preserving the integrity of the legislative process and avoiding even the appearance of a conflict of interest is the function of the ethics code found in AS 24.60.

Conclusion

For the reasons stated above, the committee finds that if, in regard to a question being put to a vote, you have a substantial interest in an enterprise and your interest is different and more substantial than that of a large class of persons to which you belong, the ethics code prohibits you from voting on the floor on a question unless the Uniform Rules require a vote. AS 24.60.030(g) In such a case you

should ask the body for permission to abstain from voting, briefly describing the fact situation leading to your conclusion that AS 24.60.030(g) prohibits you from voting. If the body does not permit you to abstain, then you must vote, and you will not have violated AS 24.60.030(g). If you do not ask for an abstention, and you do have a substantial interest described in AS 24.60.030(g) you could be found to have violated that portion of the ethics code.

AS 24.60.030(g) does not prohibit a legislator with a conflict from taking other legislative actions such as introducing, sponsoring, amending a bill, chairing a committee considering a bill, and discussing and voting on the bill while in committee. AS 24.60.030(e)(1) does not allow a legislator to take legislative action such as support for or opposition to a bill in exchange for a thing of value.

Because AS 24.60.030(a) prohibits acceptance of any benefit other than official compensation for performing your legislative duties, you should strictly separate the work that you are otherwise compensated for in your private life from your actions as a public official.

Adopted by the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics on April 23, 2004

Members present and concurring in this opinion were:

H. Connor Thomas, Chair
 Representative Mary Kapsner
 Representative Norman Rokeberg
 Senator Kim Elton
 Dennis "Skip" Cook, public member
 Ann Rabinowitz, public member
 Marianne Stillner, public member
 Herman G. Walker, public member

Member absent for the vote, but present for discussion was:

Senator Ben Stevens

BRC:lmb:mdr
 04-044.lmb

¹ "A member requesting to be excused from voting may make a brief oral statement of the reasons for the request and the question of granting permission to abstain shall be taken without further debate." Uniform Rule 34(b).

² Unless required by the Uniform Rules of the Alaska State Legislature, a legislator may not vote on a question if the legislator has an equity or ownership interest in a business, investment, real property, lease, or other enterprise if the interest is substantial and the effect on that interest of the action to be voted on is greater than the effect on a substantial class of persons to which the legislator belongs as a member of a profession, occupation, industry, or region.

³ For example, in the case of a legislator who votes on major roads in the Interior, the legislator is one of a substantial class of people who are affected by those roads. If a legislator votes on a bill affecting a road that only accesses a parcel of land of which the legislator is the sole owner, then the legislator has a substantial interest in that bill which is different and greater than anyone else and should not vote under AS 24.60.030(g).

⁴ AS 24.60.030 . . .

(e) A legislator may not directly, or by authorizing another to act on the legislator's behalf,
 (1) agree to, threaten to, or state or imply that the legislator will take or withhold a legislative, administrative, or political action, including support or opposition to a bill, employment, nominations, and appointments, as a result of a person's decision to provide or not provide a political contribution, donate or not donate to a cause favored by the legislator, or provide or not provide a thing of value;
 (2) state or imply that the legislator will perform or refrain from performing a lawful constituent service as a result of a person's decision to provide or not provide a political contribution, donate or not donate to a cause favored by the legislator, or provide or not provide a thing of value; or
 (3) unless required by the Uniform Rules of the Alaska State Legislature, take or withhold official action or exert official influence that could substantially benefit or harm the financial interest of another person with whom the legislator is negotiating for employment.

⁵ AS 24.60.990(a)(2):

(2) "anything of value," "benefit," or "thing of value" includes all matters, whether tangible or intangible, that could reasonably be considered to be a material advantage, of material worth, use, or service to the person to whom it is conferred; the terms are intended to be interpreted broadly and encompass all matters that the recipient might find sufficiently desirable to do something in exchange for; "anything of value," "benefit," or "thing of value" does not include

- (A) an item listed in AS 24.60.080(c);
- (B) campaign contributions, pledges, political endorsements, support in a political campaign, or a promise of endorsement or support;
- (C) contributions to a cause or organization, including a charity, made in response to a direct solicitation from a legislator or a person acting at the legislator's direction; or
- (D) grants under AS 37.05.316 to named recipients;

⁶ No specific fact situation has been offered for consideration, therefore this opinion is generally applicable. It is possible that in the future a specific situation may arise which will carve out an exception to the general holding.

⁷ AS 24.05.120. Rules.

At the beginning of the first regular session of each legislature, both houses shall adopt uniform rules of procedure for enacting bills into law and adopting resolutions. The rules in effect at the last regular session of the immediately preceding legislature serve as the temporary rules of the legislature until the adoption of permanent rules.

See also, Article II, Section 12 of the Constitution of the State of Alaska: "[t]he houses of each legislature shall adopt uniform rules of procedure."

⁸ Uniform Rule 55. Interpretation and Implementation of Rules.

(a) The rules of parliamentary practice comprised in Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure, 1979 edition, implement and govern the Uniform Rules of the Legislature in all cases not covered by these Uniform Rules.

⁹ Sec. 632. Committee Procedure Less Formal

1. The rules of procedure in the committee are the same as the rules of the body insofar as such rules are applicable to committee procedure. But insofar as the conditions permit, the rules limiting debate should be relaxed in order to give free discussion and not to handicap the work of committee. The

principal rules which are thus not enforced in their full vigor are the following: That no motions to close or limit a debate are allowed, that it is not necessary to arise and address the body before making a motion, that the chairman does not rise to put a question, that he does not leave the chair to speak or to make motions, that motions are not required to be seconded even though this requirement may still be retained by the body, and that a member may speak more than once at the same stage of consideration of a questions.

2. There can be no appeal to the presiding officer of the body from decisions on points of order made by committee chairmen.

Chapter 59, section 632, Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure, published in 1979.

¹⁰ There is a prohibition against influencing legislation where a legislator is negotiating with another person for employment. A legislator may not:

unless required by the Uniform Rules of the Alaska State Legislature, take or withhold official action or exert official influence that could substantially benefit or harm the financial interest of another person with whom the legislator is negotiating for employment.

AS 24.60.030(e)(3). There is no such prohibition in the legislative ethics code regarding influencing legislation affecting a legislator's employer.

¹¹ Your actual question 2 included a term that we do not understand "professional member of a Native corporation." For purposes of this opinion we assume that term means a "member of a Native corporation."

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Alaska State Legislature

Select Committee on Legislative Ethics

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May 13, 2008

ADVISORY OPINION 2008-01

Subject: Conflict of Interest – Employment

RE: You have asked the committee to advise you in regard to the following: Does your current private sector job present a conflict of interest under the Legislative Ethics Act or any other state law that establishes standards for the conduct of legislators?

You are a legislator and therefore covered by the legislative ethics code. You have requested an advisory opinion concerning facts and circumstances that you have related. The committee relies on facts that you have described in answering your questions.

Statement of Facts

You have been an employee working in industry A since 1983, and have worked for employer B in that industry since 2002. You are a facility support coordinator with employer B. In that job you have multiple responsibilities that include reviewing contracts and services with tenants who rent property from employer B, helping to ensure that employer B complies with regulations that relate to the employer's handling of certain hazardous chemicals, and supervising the disposal of employer B's surplus property by sale or donation. Except in connection with the duties you have described you do not appear to be involved in making financial or policy decisions for employer B. Industry A and employer B are principally engaged in making a profit from the use of natural resources, and your job duties are incidental, not central, to that effort. According to the information you have provided it appears that employer B compensates you at a fixed rate based on the amount of time that you work, and that you are on an unpaid leave of absence from employer B during legislative sessions. Industry A, through your job as facility support coordinator for employer B, is the major source of your annual income and is also a major source of your future retirement income. A large majority, if not all, of the investments you maintain through your retirement account with employer B appear to be otherwise unconnected to either industry A or employer B.

Discussion

The Legislative Ethics Act establishes standards for the conduct of legislators. Other state laws that might be relevant to a specific set of facts include the Constitution of the State of Alaska, the election statutes, the legislative oath, and certain criminal statutes. Because the committee is charged with

interpreting the Legislative Ethics Act and rendering opinions based on that interpretation we do not interpret or apply other state laws in this opinion.

Unless required by the Uniform Rules of the Alaska State Legislature, a legislator may not vote on a question if the legislator has an equity or ownership interest in a business, investment, real property, lease, or other enterprise, if the interest is substantial, and if the effect on that interest of the action to be voted on is greater than the effect on a substantial class of persons to which the legislator belongs as a member of a profession, occupation, industry, or region. AS 24.60.030(g). According to information you have provided, a substantial percentage of your annual income is from working in industry A, where you have been employed for some time by employer B, and a substantial percentage of your retirement income is likely to come from retirement benefits provided by employer B and past employers you have worked for in industry A.

Your job is not an equity or ownership interest in industry A or employer B, and you do not appear to have any other interest that might be considered an equity or ownership interest in industry A or employer B. Under AS 24.60.030, you are only prevented from voting on a question when the potential effect of the action to be voted on would be greater than the effect it might have on a substantial class of persons to which you belong as a member of industry A or as an employee of employer B. Nothing in the description of your job duties that you have provided to the committee indicates that the potential effect of issues you are likely to be in a position to vote on will be greater on you than on others who work in your industry or occupation. As you have described it, your position with employer B is a rank and file position, and therefore any benefit or detriment that you might experience as the result of your voting or taking other legislative action on a matter affecting employer B or industry A is likely to affect you as an employee in the same way as it affects most rank and file employees of employer B or industry A.

Even if your private sector job does not present a conflict of interest at this time, that circumstance could change. For example, you could change employers. Unless required by the Uniform Rules of the Alaska State Legislature, a legislator may not take or withhold official action or exert official influence that could substantially benefit or harm the financial interest of another person with whom the legislator is negotiating for employment. A legislator's introduction of a bill that could substantially benefit the legislator's *prospective* employer would be of special concern to the committee if the bill were introduced at a time when the legislator is negotiating for employment with the prospective employer.¹

In Advisory Opinion 07-01 we said:

Under AS 24.60.010(2), in order to protect the integrity of the legislative process, even the appearance of a conflict of interest in the legislative branch of government is to be avoided. When a legislator has a conflict of interest in a matter, the Uniform Rules of the Alaska State Legislature can require that the legislator cast a vote, the conflict of interest notwithstanding. However, a legislator's introduction or sponsorship of a bill is always discretionary; the rules never require that the legislator introduce or sponsor a bill. When, under the Act, a legislator has a conflict of interest in a matter, introducing or sponsoring legislation in the matter is contrary to AS 24.60.010 generally, and improper under AS 24.60.010(2) specifically.

In Advisory Opinion 07-07, in which we determined, among other things, that it would be a violation of the Legislative Ethics Act for a legislator to distribute legislative business cards while campaigning door-to-door, we said:

The legislature set forth the Act's foundational principles in AS 24.60.010, and the first one, AS 24.60.010(1), says:

(1) high moral and ethical standards among public servants in the legislative branch of government are essential to assure the trust, respect, and confidence of the people of this state;

Creating the appearance of impropriety while in office is inconsistent with this principle. In previous advisory opinions the committee has indicated that the appearance of impropriety would be a factor the committee would consider in determining whether or not the Legislative Ethics Act has been violated.²

The facts relied on by the committee in this matter do not indicate that industry A or employer B subsidize or reward you in any way for the work you do as a legislator or that your continued employment with employer B is at all contingent upon your vote or other legislative action you take. The third and fourth principles on which the Legislative Ethics Act is based say:

(3) the public's commitment to a part-time citizen legislature requires legislators be drawn from all parts of society and the best way to attract competent people is to acknowledge that they provide their time and energy to the state, often at substantial personal and financial sacrifice;

(4) a part-time citizen legislature implies that legislators are expected and permitted to earn outside income and that the rules governing legislators' conduct during and after leaving public service must be clear, fair, and as complete as possible; the rules, however, should not impose unreasonable or unnecessary burdens that will discourage citizens from entering or staying in government service;³

Conclusion

For the reasons stated above, the committee finds that your private sector employment and retirement benefit plans, as described, do not present a conflict of interest under the Legislative Ethics Act and, therefore, do not prevent you from voting on legislation or taking other legislative action, even where the interests of industry A or employer B are concerned. You have asked that if the committee reaches this conclusion we advise you of further action that you should take; there are no other actions that you are required to take.

Adopted by the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics on May 13, 2008.

Members present and concurring in this opinion were:

Herman G. Walker Jr, Chair
Representative Berta Gardner
Representative Bob Roses
Senator Con Bunde
Dennis "Skip" Cook, public member
H. Conner Thomas, public member
Gary J. Turner, public member

Member dissenting from this opinion was:
Senator Gary Stevens

Member absent for the vote, but present for discussion was:
Ann Rabinowitz, public member

DCW:ljlw
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¹ AO 07-01, citing AS 24.60.030(e).

² AO 07-07, citing AO 85-04, AO 94-08, AO 94-10, AO 96-04, AO 96-07, AO 99-01, and AO 05-01.

³ AS 24.60.010.

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February 23, 2012

ADVISORY OPINION 2011-05

RE: Potential conflicts of interest, under the Legislative Ethics Act, related to a serving legislator's job in the private sector.

You are a legislator and therefore covered by the Legislative Ethics Act. You have requested an advisory opinion concerning facts and circumstances that you have related. The committee relies on facts that you have described in answering your questions.

Statement of Facts¹

You work in the private sector for company A, a wholly owned subsidiary of company B, in a position with duties that include the following:

1. developing rural business opportunities for company A, nationally and in rural Alaska, and increasing company A's earnings through direct contact and networking with "key partners" in Alaska and "target markets" outside of Alaska;
2. increasing product offerings in under-developed markets by means including "the promotion, education, and further reach of these key markets through networking, community involvement, and marketing efforts";
3. representing company A in the Alaska business community, including attending chamber of commerce meetings, economic conferences and other important business events;
4. "underwriting and compliance of New Markets Tax Credits investments" by means including "marketing and sales of the investments to potential project sponsors with Alaska" and three other states;
5. playing a major role in securing, preparing, and delivering "consulting services for rural economic development through strategic planning, financial consulting, and community development," partly through coordinating with other company B subsidiaries and organizations that deliver services to villages in Alaska; and

¹ This statement is not comprehensive -- the committee relies on all of the information that you provided with your request -- but it summarizes some of the information you provided and includes quotations from your written request and the two-page position description you attached.

6. traveling at company A's expense to meet with village leaders and citizens to discuss how company A can work with them, the local government, and local businesses to improve local economic development; some of the leaders and citizens you encounter while on business for company A may also be among your political constituents, and they might ask you to answer questions about legislative matters, or take legislative action, as their elected representative.

Questions Presented²

Your questions are:

1. Does my employment by company A present a conflict of interest under the Legislative Ethics Act?
2. As a legislator, would my voting on matters in which company B supports or opposes a particular political outcome, publically or through lobbyists, violate conflict of interest provisions of the Legislative Ethics Act?
3. Some of the leaders and citizens company A pays me to communicate with on the company's behalf may also be my political constituents; does the Legislative Ethics Act permit me to receive and respond to questions and requests from them that are directly related to my role as a legislator, while I am on a business trip paid for by company A?
4. Does the Legislative Ethics Act prohibit me, in my role as employee of company A, from testifying before the U.S. Congress and other federal agencies, or interacting with officials from the federal government and states other than Alaska, regarding company A's interests in one or more federal programs?

Discussion

The Legislative Ethics Act establishes standards for the conduct of legislators. Other state laws that might be relevant to a specific set of facts include the Constitution of the State of Alaska, the election statutes, the legislative oath, and certain criminal statutes. Because the committee is charged with rendering opinions based on our interpretation of the Legislative Ethics Act, we do not interpret or apply other state laws in this opinion.

Question 1. In answer to your first question, your employment by company A does not, on its own, present a conflict of interest under the Legislative Ethics Act. The Legislative Ethics Act does not prohibit legislators from being employed in the private sector, even during legislative sessions.³ In fact, the third and fourth principles on which the Legislative Ethics Act is based say:

(3) the public's commitment to a part-time citizen legislature
requires legislators be drawn from all parts of society and the best way to

² For the purposes of this opinion we have modified your questions to limit their scope to the applicability of the Legislative Ethics Act, because issuing advisory opinions beyond that scope exceeds the authority given the committee under AS 24.60.140 and 24.60.160.

³ AO 08-02.

attract competent people is to acknowledge that they provide their time and energy to the state, often at substantial personal and financial sacrifice;

(4) a part-time citizen legislature implies that legislators are expected and permitted to earn outside income and that the rules governing legislators' conduct during and after leaving public service must be clear, fair, and as complete as possible; the rules, however, should not impose unreasonable or unnecessary burdens that will discourage citizens from entering or staying in government service;⁴

Generally, you should be aware that certain provisions in the Legislative Ethics Act can limit how a legislator obtains outside work and how a legislator is paid for outside work. For example, under AS 24.60.085(a)(1), a legislator may not seek or accept "compensation for personal services that is significantly greater than the value of the services rendered taking into account the higher rates generally charged by specialists in a profession. . . ." Also, you should be aware of AS 24.60.085(c), which says:

(c) During the term for which elected or appointed, a legislator may not, directly or by authorizing another to act on the legislator's behalf, accept or agree to accept compensation, except from the State of Alaska, for work associated with legislative action, administrative action, or political action. Notwithstanding AS 24.60.990, in this subsection, "administrative action" and "legislative action" have the meanings given in AS 24.45.171.

Also, although your dual employment may not create a conflict of interest under the Act, depending on specific facts your private-sector job may trigger one or more of the Act's disclosure requirements, including the requirements of AS 24.60.070 that relate to close economic associations, and the financial disclosure requirements under AS 24.60.200.⁵

Question 2. Your second question is whether, as a legislator, voting on matters in which company B supports or opposes a particular political outcome, publicly or through lobbyists, would violate conflict of interest provisions of the Legislative Ethics Act. We first note that, because company B is the parent company of company A, based on the facts you have provided we view the relationship between companies A and B as a close one in which, generally, a benefit to one would tend to be a benefit to the other. To the extent your vote or other legislative action might result in a benefit to company B it is likely to also result in a benefit to company A, and vice versa. This does not mean that taking or withholding legislative action or voting as a legislator on matters in which company B supports or opposes a particular political outcome would automatically

⁴ AS 24.60.010.

⁵ Although financial disclosures required by AS 24.60.200 are made to the Alaska Public Offices Commission, not the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics, under AS 24.60.260(b) a false, deliberately misleading or incomplete disclosure is subject to the Legislative Ethics Act's complaint procedure under AS 24.60.170.

violate the Act's conflict of interest provisions; however, the circumstances do create that possibility.

We addressed a similar question in AO 08-01, and advised a legislator that a private sector job did not pose a conflict of interest based on the facts presented, which were as follows:

You have been an employee working in industry A since 1983, and have worked for employer B in that industry since 2002. You are a facility support coordinator with employer B. In that job you have multiple responsibilities that include reviewing contracts and services with tenants who rent property from employer B, helping to ensure that employer B complies with regulations that relate to the employer's handling of certain hazardous chemicals, and supervising the disposal of employer B's surplus property by sale or donation. Except in connection with the duties you have described you do not appear to be involved in making financial or policy decisions for employer B. Industry A and employer B are principally engaged in making a profit from the use of natural resources, and your job duties are incidental, not central, to that effort. According to the information you have provided it appears that employer B compensates you at a fixed rate based on the amount of time that you work, and that you are on an unpaid leave of absence from employer B during legislative sessions. Industry A, through your job as facility support coordinator for employer B, is the major source of your annual income and is also a major source of your future retirement income. A large majority, if not all, of the investments you maintain through your retirement account with employer B appear to be otherwise unconnected to either industry A or employer B.

Those facts are different than the facts you present; nevertheless, as in AO 08-01, the job you have described does not automatically create a conflict of interest. As we advised in AO 08-01, the answer to a question of whether or not a voting conflict exists rests on the facts specific to each vote.

For example, an ethical conflict could arise in connection with your vote on an issue if the outcome might have a substantial effect on your financial interests, depending on what those interests are and how they are affected. Under AS 24.60.030(g), a legislator may not vote on a question if the legislator has an equity or ownership interest in a business, investment, real property, lease, or other enterprise -- if the interest is substantial, and if the effect on that interest of the action to be voted on is greater than the effect on a substantial class of persons to which the legislator belongs as a member of a profession, occupation, industry, or region. An exception, built into AS 24.60.030(g), allows the legislator to vote even in these circumstances, if the Uniform Rules of the Alaska State Legislature requires it,⁶ but the exception does not eliminate the conflict

⁶ Uniform Rule 34(b) requires every member present to vote unless permitted, by unanimous consent of the member's house, to abstain. In practice this has meant that, when a legislator asks to abstain from a floor vote because of a perceived ethical conflict,

altogether. The facts you have provided do not suggest that you have an equity or ownership business in either company B or company A, but if that were to change then a vote conflict under AS 24.60.030(g) might form.

Even if your private sector job does not present a conflict of interest at this time, that circumstance could change. For example, in the future you might change private employers, or renegotiate your employment terms with company A. Unless required by the Uniform Rules of the Alaska State Legislature, a legislator may not take or withhold official action or exert official influence that could substantially benefit or harm the financial interest of another person with whom the legislator is negotiating for employment.⁷ "Official action" is not defined in the Legislative Ethics Act, but we find that it includes "legislative action," which, under AS 24.60.990(9), means "conduct relating to the development, drafting, consideration, sponsorship, enactment or defeat, support or opposition to or of a law, amendment, resolution, report, nomination, or other matter affected by legislative action or inaction."⁸

Question 3. Some of the leaders and citizens company A pays you to communicate with on the company's behalf may also be your political constituents, and you have asked whether the Legislative Ethics Act permits you to receive and respond to questions and requests from them that are directly related to your role as a legislator, while on a business trip paid for by company A. In other words, they might ask that, in your role as a legislator, you provide information to them or take other legislative action on their behalf. Communicating with constituents or taking legislative action on their behalf, in these circumstances, is not prohibited outright by the Legislative Ethics Act; however, it can raise issues under various sections of the Act, including AS 24.60.030(e), depending on specific facts.

AS 23.60.030(e)(1) may be particularly relevant. For example, in Senate Subcommittee Complaint 10-02 the Senate Subcommittee investigated and heard allegations that a senator who traveled to a community and appeared at a city council meeting in his role as the member of a corporate board of directors violated the Legislative Ethics Act. The subcommittee found that during the meeting the senator implied he would use his senatorial power by withholding legislative action -- state funding for the city's capital improvement projects -- in exchange for a thing of value -- a favorable vote by the city on

an objection by any member present prevents unanimous consent and the member seeking to abstain must vote.

⁷ AS 24.60.030(e)(3).

⁸ In AO 07-01 we said that a legislator's introduction of a bill that could substantially benefit the legislator's employer would be of special concern to the committee in connection with AS 24.60.030(e) if the bill were introduced at a time when the legislator is negotiating terms of employment with that employer.

a matter of concern to the corporation. The Subcommittee determined that this violated AS 24.60.030(e)(1), which says that a legislator may not

(1) agree to, threaten to, or state or imply that the legislator will take or withhold a legislative, administrative, or political action, including support or opposition to a bill, employment, nominations, and appointments, as a result of a person's decision to provide or not provide a political contribution, donate or not donate to a cause favored by the legislator, or provide or not provide a thing of value;⁹

Provisions of the Legislative Ethics Act that apply more generally to the circumstances you describe in connection with Question 3 are discussed below.

Question 4. You have asked whether the Legislative Ethics Act prohibits you, in your role as employee of company A, from testifying before the U.S. Congress and other federal agencies, or interacting with officials from the federal government and states other than Alaska, regarding company A's interests in one or more federal programs. The short answer is no; however, depending on additional facts in a specific instance, various sections of the Legislative Ethics Act may apply. Some of those sections are discussed below.

Generally applicable sections of the Legislative Ethics Act

Certain sections of the Legislative Ethics Act may become especially relevant to any of the four circumstances you have asked about, depending on additional facts that may come up in those circumstances. Among potentially relevant sections are the following:

AS 24.60.060. This section prohibits a legislator or legislative employee from knowingly making an unauthorized disclosure of information that is made confidential by law and was acquired by the legislator or legislative employee in the course of official (legislative) duties. An alleged violation of this section can lead to criminal prosecution in addition to a complaint under the Legislative Ethics Act.

⁹ "Legislative action" is defined in AS 24.60.990(a)(10) to mean

conduct relating to the development, drafting, consideration, sponsorship, enactment or defeat, support or opposition to or of a law, amendment, resolution, report, nomination, or other matter affected by legislative action or inaction;

"Thing of value" is defined in AS 24.60.990(a)(2) to mean

all matters, whether tangible or intangible, that could reasonably be considered to be a material advantage, of material worth, use, or service to the person to whom it is conferred; the terms are intended to be interpreted broadly and encompass all matters that the recipient might find sufficiently desirable to do something in exchange for;

AS 24.60.030(a)(1) prohibits legislators from soliciting, agreeing to accept, or accepting a benefit other than official compensation for the performance of public duties. This, for example, would prohibit you from being paid twice -- once as legislative compensation under AS 24.10.100 - 24.10.130, and once by your employer -- for performing a legislative duty. Depending on specific facts, there is a risk that the committee or a member of the public may at times not be able to identify the line between your private sector job duties and your legislative duties, in connection with the circumstances you have described; AS 24.60.030(a)(1) is one provision under which this could lead to a perception that the Act has been violated.

AS 24.60.030(a)(2) and some of its exceptions might also be relevant. AS 24.60.030(a)(2) says that a legislator or legislative employee may not

(2) use public funds, facilities, equipment, services, or another government asset or resource for a nonlegislative purpose, for involvement in or support of or opposition to partisan political activity, or for the private benefit of either the legislator, legislative employee, or another person. . . .

Exceptions to this prohibition, under AS 24.60.030(a)(2) and (a)(3), allow:

(A) limited use of state property and resources for personal purposes if the use does not interfere with the performance of public duties and either the cost or value related to the use is nominal or the legislator or legislative employee reimburses the state for the cost of the use;

and

(D) a legislator from using the legislator's private office in the capital city during a legislative session, and for the 10 days immediately before and the 10 days immediately after a legislative session, for nonlegislative purposes if the use does not interfere with the performance of public duties and if there is no cost to the state for the use of the space and equipment, other than utility costs and minimal wear and tear, or the legislator promptly reimburses the state for the cost; an office is considered a legislator's private office under this subparagraph if it is the primary space in the capital city reserved for use by the legislator, whether or not it is shared with others;

AS 24.60.030(a)(4). This section, related to the use of legislative employee resources, might be especially relevant at times when demands of a legislator's private sector job duties and legislative duties overlap. It says that a legislator may not at any time require a legislative employee to perform services for the private benefit of the legislator or allow the employee to perform services for the legislator's private benefit while the employee is on government time. There is an exception to this, under AS 24.60.030(a)(4), for services, performed in an unusual or infrequent situation, that are reasonably necessary to permit the legislator to perform official duties.

AS 24.60.010(2). This provision relates to avoiding the appearance of impropriety. In Advisory Opinion 07-01, we discussed AS 24.60.010(2) in connection with circumstances where a legislator was in a position to promote legislation favoring a company his company regularly contracted with. We advised:

Under AS 24.60.010(2), in order to protect the integrity of the legislative process, even the appearance of a conflict of interest in the legislative branch of government is to be avoided. When a legislator has a conflict of interest in a matter, the Uniform Rules of the Alaska State Legislature can require that the legislator cast a vote, the conflict of interest notwithstanding. However, a legislator's introduction or sponsorship of a bill is always discretionary; the rules never require that the legislator introduce or sponsor a bill. When, under the Act, a legislator has a conflict of interest in a matter, introducing or sponsoring legislation in the matter is contrary to AS 24.60.010 generally, and improper under AS 24.60.010(2) specifically.

AS 24.60.010(1). This provision also relates to avoiding the appearance of impropriety. In Advisory Opinion 07-07, in which we determined, among other things, that it would be a violation of the Legislative Ethics Act for a legislator to distribute legislative business cards while campaigning door-to-door, we said:

The legislature set forth the Act's foundational principles in AS 24.60.010, and the first one, AS 24.60.010(1), says:

(1) high moral and ethical standards among public servants in the legislative branch of government are essential to assure the trust, respect, and confidence of the people of this state;

Creating the appearance of impropriety while in office is inconsistent with this principle. In previous advisory opinions the committee has indicated that the appearance of impropriety would be a factor the committee would consider in determining whether or not the Legislative Ethics Act has been violated.¹⁰

Conclusion

The committee is not able to anticipate every fact or circumstance that might exist in the future in connection with potential conflicts between your private employment and your obligations under the Legislative Ethics Act. From time to time you may determine that the Act limits or prohibits certain conduct related to the job, or that it requires disclosure of certain information related to the job. If in the future you have a specific factual situation concerning your job duties that you feel may pose a conflict of interest, please request an informal opinion from committee staff, or a formal advisory opinion from the committee.

¹⁰ AO 07-07, citing AO 85-04, AO 94-08, AO 94-10, AO 96-04, AO 96-07, AO 99-01, and AO 05-01.

The facts we rely on for this opinion do not indicate that you will be compensated in any way by company A for the work you do as a legislator or that your continued employment with company A is at all contingent upon your vote or other legislative action you take. For this reason and based on the foregoing discussion we find that

1. your employment by company A does not, on its own, present a conflict of interest under the Legislative Ethics Act;
2. your voting as a legislator on matters in which company B supports or opposes a particular political outcome, publicly or through lobbyists, would not necessarily violate conflict of interest provisions of the Legislative Ethics Act, although in some circumstances it might, depending on the facts of those particular circumstances;
3. communicating with constituents or taking legislative action on their behalf, in these circumstances, is not prohibited outright by the Legislative Ethics Act; however, it can raise issues under various sections of the Act, including AS 24.60.030(e), depending on specific facts; and
4. the Legislative Ethics Act does not prohibit you, in your role as employee of company A, from testifying before the U.S. Congress and other federal agencies, or interacting with officials from the federal government and states other than Alaska, regarding company A's interests in one or more federal programs; however depending on additional facts in a specific instance, various sections of the Legislative Ethics Act may apply.

Adopted by the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics on February 23, 2012.

A unanimous vote of the members present.

Members present and concurring in this opinion were:

Herman G. Walker, Jr., Chair
Representative Craig Johnson (alternate for Representative Carl Gatto)
Representative Chris Tuck
Senator John Coghill
Antoinette Mallott, public member
Gary J. Turner, public member
H. Connor Thomas, public member

Members dissenting from this opinion were: None.

Member present and abstaining from voting because not present for entire discussion:
Dennis "Skip" Cook, public member

Members absent were:
Representative Carl Gatto
Senator Gary Stevens

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Alaska State Legislature

Select Committee on Legislative Ethics

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March 26, 2013

ADVISORY OPINION 2013-01

Subject: Conflict of Interest -- Employment

You have asked the committee to advise you in regard to the following: Do your current private sector jobs or your ownership of company stock in connection with one of those jobs create an ethical conflict of interest under the Legislative Ethics Act?

You are a member of the legislature and therefore covered by the Legislative Ethics Act. You have requested an advisory opinion concerning facts and circumstances that you have related. In providing that opinion, the committee has relied solely on the facts you provided in a written narrative, dated February 19, 2013.¹ For the purpose of discussion we summarize those facts as follows:

Summary of Facts

You have been an employee working in industry A since 1982, and you have been employed by employer B in that industry since 1984. Industry A and employer B are principally engaged in making a profit from the use of natural resources, and your job duties are incidental, not central, to that effort. Your duties do not involve what you have described as making "key financial or strategic decisions" for employer B. You have multiple supervisory responsibilities, including running a small plant owned by the company. You are compensated with an annual salary in the same manner as other employees who are at your level of management in industry A. Your compensation and your job duties are not based on your membership in the legislature. When the legislature is in session you are on unpaid leave from employer B.

You receive some company stock in employer B as the result of selecting stock from among various options available to employees of employer B who are eligible for benefits under an employer-provided defined contribution retirement plan. The number of shares you own is extremely small in proportion to the total number of employer B's company stock shares that are outstanding. Other than legal rights you may have in connection with these shares, you do not have a significant equity or ownership interest in employer B. You estimate that all of your personal investments in industry A,

¹ Subsequent to this date we received additional written information from you containing limited information on bonuses, and we have reviewed that information.

including your company stock in employer B, make up less than 20 percent of all investment assets owned by your immediate family.

About two-thirds of your immediate family's income is from your employment with employer B. However, you are also a self-employed commercial fisherman who owns and operates a commercial fishing vessel and commercial fishing permit in the state, and you are self-employed in a third occupation related to renting out residential housing.

Discussion

In AO 08-01 we considered facts very similar to those you have provided in answering a nearly identical question about the Legislative Ethics Act and employment with a company in the private sector. Regarding the Act's requirements in connection with voting we said:

Unless required by the Uniform Rules of the Alaska State Legislature, a legislator may not vote on a question if the legislator has an equity or ownership interest in a business, investment, real property, lease, or other enterprise, if the interest is substantial, and if the effect on that interest of the action to be voted on is greater than the effect on a substantial class of persons to which the legislator belongs as a member of a profession, occupation, industry, or region. AS 24.60.030(g).²

Employment. According to information you have provided, a substantial percentage of your annual income is from working in industry A, where you have been employed for some time by employer B, and aside from company stock shares you do not appear to have any other interest that might be considered an equity or ownership interest in industry A or employer B. Under AS 24.60.030(g), you are only prevented from voting on a question when the action to be voted on would potentially have a greater effect on your equity or ownership interest than on the similar interests of a substantial class of persons to which you belong as a member of industry A or as an employee of employer B. As we found when considering facts similar to yours in AO 08-01, nothing in the description of your job duties that you have provided to the committee indicates that the potential effect of issues you are currently in a position to vote on will be greater on you than on others who work in your industry or occupation. However, as new issues arise, you should consider their effect on your equity or ownership interest.

As you have described your position with employer B, it is a salaried managerial position in which you are responsible for supervising the day-to-day operation of a small plant owned by employer B, and for evaluating and coordinating employee training, compliance with regulations, and some other aspects of employer B's operations at the small plant. You are compensated with an annual salary in the same manner as other employees who are at your level of management in industry A; your compensation and your job duties are not based on your membership in the legislature; other than a

² We construe "substantial class of persons," under AS 24.60.030(g) as a reference to the size of a group of persons who are similarly situated.

relatively small amount of company stock you do not have an equity or ownership interest in employer B or industry A; and, when the legislature is in session, you are on unpaid leave from employer B. Therefore, any benefit or detriment that you might experience as the result of your voting or taking other legislative action on a matter affecting employer B or industry A will affect you as an employee in the same way as it affects most salaried employees in industry A, whether they are of the rank and file or management.

Self Employment. When we apply the foregoing points about employment with employer B to the facts you have provided about your self-employment in the commercial fishing and rental property industries, we reach a similar result; voting, or taking or withholding other legislative action in connection with those industries, is not very likely to result in a personal benefit to you that is disproportionate to the benefit another person who is self-employed in that industry might receive as a result of the same.

Stock. You have described your ownership of stock in industry A and employer B as part of retirement benefits you receive by participating in an employer-sponsored retirement plan that is available to employees of employer B. We considered similar facts in AO 08-01 and concluded that the retirement benefits in that instance, including a small number of stock shares in the employer's company, did not present a conflict of interest under the Legislative Ethics Act.

Foundational Principles of the Act. Because of the difficulty in predicting future changes in the circumstances of your employment, self-employment and personal investments, it is useful to note generally the Legislative Ethics Act's foundational principles, under AS 24.60.010. The first one, AS 24.60.010(1), says:

(1) high moral and ethical standards among public servants in the legislative branch of government are essential to assure the trust, respect, and confidence of the people of this state;

As we have previously advised, creating the appearance of impropriety while in office is inconsistent with the principle in AS 24.60.010(1).³ In previous advisory opinions, the committee has indicated that the appearance of impropriety would be a factor the committee would consider in determining whether or not the Legislative Ethics Act has been violated.⁴

³ AO 08-01, *citing* AO 07-07 -- a prior opinion in which we determined that it would be a violation of the Legislative Ethics Act for a legislator to distribute legislative business cards while campaigning door-to-door.

⁴ AO 07-07, *citing* AO 85-04. *See also* AO 94-08; AO 94-10; AO 96-04; AO 96-07; AO 99-01; and AO 05-01.

In AO 08-01 we also advised as follows:

Under AS 24.60.010(2), in order to protect the integrity of the legislative process, even the appearance of a conflict of interest in the legislative branch of government is to be avoided. When a legislator has a conflict of interest in a matter, the Uniform Rules of the Alaska State Legislature can require that the legislator cast a vote, the conflict of interest notwithstanding. However, a legislator's introduction or sponsorship of a bill is always discretionary; the rules never require that the legislator introduce or sponsor a bill. When, under the Act, a legislator has a conflict of interest in a matter, introducing or sponsoring legislation in the matter is contrary to AS 24.60.010 generally, and improper under AS 24.60.010(2) specifically.⁵

The facts relied on by the committee in this matter do not indicate that industry A or employer B subsidize or reward you in any way for the work you do as a legislator or that your continued employment with employer B is at all contingent upon your vote or other legislative action you take. As we noted in our discussion of facts and questions similar to yours in AO 08-01, the third and fourth principles on which the Legislative Ethics Act is based say:

(3) the public's commitment to a part-time citizen legislature requires legislators be drawn from all parts of society and the best way to attract competent people is to acknowledge that they provide their time and energy to the state, often at substantial personal and financial sacrifice;

(4) a part-time citizen legislature implies that legislators are expected and permitted to earn outside income and that the rules governing legislators' conduct during and after leaving public service must be clear, fair, and as complete as possible; the rules, however, should not impose unreasonable or unnecessary burdens that will discourage citizens from entering or staying in government service;⁶

Conclusion

For the reasons stated above and based on the facts you have provided, the committee finds that neither your private sector employment within industry A and with employer B nor your self-employment in commercial fishing or the residential rental industry present a conflict of interest under the Legislative Ethics Act. We also find, as we found when similar facts were before us in AO-08-01, that your ownership of a number of shares of company stock in employer B -- a number that is extremely small in comparison to the total amount of outstanding stock in the company, confers no significant equity or ownership interest in employer B, and is less than 20 percent of all investment assets

⁵ *Citing* AO 07-01.

⁶ AS 24.60.010.

owned by your immediate family -- does not present a conflict of interest under the Legislative Ethics Act. Therefore, your current employment outside of the legislature and your current ownership of company stock in employer B do not prevent you from voting on legislation or taking other legislative action, even where the interests of industry A, employer B, the commercial fishing industry, or the residential rental industry are concerned. However, we have not reviewed any specific bills or legislative actions. As a result, this opinion is necessarily general and obviously cannot address all future legislative possibilities.

As noted in our discussion above, if circumstances related to your employment, industry A, or your investments change, or if a legislative bill, resolution, or amendment is proposed that affects your interests more than it affects the interests of a group of persons who are similarly situated, a conflict of interest could arise.

Adopted by unanimous vote of the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics on March 26, 2013.

Members present and concurring in this opinion were:

H. Connor Thomas, Chair
Representative Charisse Millett
Representative Chris Tuck
Senator Cathy Giessel
Senator Berta Gardner
Antoinette "Toni" Mallott, public member
Dennis "Skip" Cook, public member
Herman G. Walker, Jr., public member
Gary J. Turner, public member

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