

SENATE CS FOR CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 368(STA)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Offered: 4/10/08

Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to allowing legislators and legislative employees to accept certain gifts**
2 **from lobbyists, to clarifying the Legislative Ethics Act as it relates to legislative**
3 **volunteers and educational trainees, to reducing the frequency of publication of**
4 **summaries by the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics, and to revising procedures**
5 **and fines related to the late filing of disclosures required by the Legislative Ethics Act."**

6 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

7 *** Section 1.** AS 24.60.080(a) is amended to read:

8 (a) Except as otherwise provided in this section, a legislator or legislative
9 employee may not

10 (1) solicit, accept, or receive, directly or indirectly, a gift worth \$250
11 or more, whether in the form of money, services, a loan, travel, entertainment,
12 hospitality, promise, or other form, or gifts from the same person worth less than \$250
13 that in a calendar year aggregate to \$250 or more in value;

1 (2) solicit, accept, or receive a gift with any monetary value from a
 2 lobbyist, an immediate family member of a lobbyist, or a person acting on behalf of a
 3 lobbyist, except

4 (A) food or beverage for immediate consumption; [OR]

5 (B) **a contribution to a charity event from any person at any**
 6 **time, and** tickets for a charity event at any time, except that tickets to or gifts
 7 received at a charity event under this subparagraph are subject to the calendar
 8 year limit on the value of gifts received by a legislator or legislative employee
 9 in (1) of this subsection; in this subparagraph, "charity event" means an event
 10 the proceeds of which go to a charitable organization with tax-free status under
 11 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3) and that the Alaska Legislative Council has approved in
 12 advance; the tickets may entitle the bearer to admission to the event, to
 13 entertainment, to food or beverages, or to other gifts or services involved in the
 14 charity event;

15 (C) **a gift that is unconnected with the recipient's legislative**
 16 **status and is from a member of the legislator's or legislative employee's**
 17 **immediate family;**

18 (D) **a gift delivered on the premises of a state facility and**
 19 **accepted on behalf of a recognized nonpolitical charitable organization; or**

20 (E) **a compassionate gift under AS 24.60.075.**

21 * **Sec. 2.** AS 24.60.080(h) is amended to read:

22 (h) A legislator, a legislative committee other than the Select Committee on
 23 Legislative Ethics, or a legislative agency may accept a gift of (1) volunteer services
 24 for legislative purposes so long as the person making the gift of services is not
 25 receiving compensation from another source for the services, or (2) the services of a
 26 trainee who is participating in an educational program approved by the committee if
 27 the services are used for legislative purposes. The committee shall approve training
 28 under a program of the University of Alaska and training under 29 U.S.C. 2801 - 2945
 29 (Workforce Investment Act of 1998). [A LEGISLATIVE VOLUNTEER OR
 30 EDUCATIONAL TRAINEE SHALL BE CONSIDERED TO BE A LEGISLATIVE
 31 EMPLOYEE FOR PURPOSES OF COMPLIANCE WITH THIS SECTION,

1 AS 24.60.030 - 24.60.039, 24.60.060, 24.60.085, 24.60.158 - 24.60.170, 24.60.176,
 2 AND 24.60.178. IF A PERSON BELIEVES THAT A LEGISLATIVE VOLUNTEER
 3 OR EDUCATIONAL TRAINEE HAS VIOLATED THE PROVISIONS OF ONE OF
 4 THOSE SECTIONS, THE PERSON MAY FILE A COMPLAINT UNDER
 5 AS 24.60.170. THE PROVISIONS OF AS 24.60.170 APPLY TO THE
 6 PROCEEDING.]

7 * **Sec. 3.** AS 24.60.080 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

8 (l) A legislative volunteer or educational trainee shall be considered to be a
 9 legislative employee for purposes of compliance with this section, AS 24.60.030 -
 10 24.60.039, 24.60.060, 24.60.085, 24.60.158 - 24.60.170, 24.60.176, and 24.60.178. If
 11 a person believes that a legislative volunteer or educational trainee has violated the
 12 provisions of one of those sections, the person may file a complaint under
 13 AS 24.60.170. The provisions of AS 24.60.170 apply to the proceeding.

14 * **Sec. 4.** AS 24.60.150(a) is amended to read:

15 (a) The committee shall

16 (1) adopt procedures to facilitate the receipt of inquiries and prompt
 17 rendition of its opinions;

18 (2) publish **annual** [SEMI-ANNUAL] summaries of decisions and
 19 advisory opinions with sufficient deletions in the summaries to prevent disclosing the
 20 identity of the persons involved in the decisions or opinions that have remained
 21 confidential;

22 (3) publish legislative ethics materials, including an annually updated
 23 handbook on standards of ethical conduct and a bimonthly legislative newsletter, to
 24 help educate legislators, legislative employees, and public members of the committee
 25 on the subject of legislative ethics;

26 (4) within 10 days of the first day of each regular session of the
 27 legislature and at other times determined by the committee, administer two types of
 28 legislative ethics courses that teach means of compliance with this chapter and are
 29 designed to give an understanding of this chapter's purpose under AS 24.60.010; one
 30 course, for returning legislators, legislative employees, or public members of the
 31 committee, shall refresh knowledge and review compliance issues; a separate course

1 shall be designed to give first-time legislators, legislative employees, or public
2 members of the committee a fundamental understanding of this chapter and how to
3 comply with it.

4 * **Sec. 5.** AS 24.60.260(c) is amended to read:

5 (c) The committee may impose a fine on a person who files a disclosure after
6 a deadline set by this chapter. The amount of the fine imposed under this subsection
7 may not exceed \$2 for each day to a maximum of \$100 for each [DISCLOSURE FOR
8 A] late **filing unless the committee determines that the late filing was inadvertent**
9 **or willful. If** [DISCLOSURE. HOWEVER, IF] the committee finds that a late filing
10 was inadvertent, the maximum fine the committee may impose under this subsection is
11 \$25. **If the committee determines that the late filing was willful, the amount of the**
12 **fine imposed under this subsection may be \$100 for each day but may not exceed**
13 **a maximum of \$2,500.**