

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

[P E R F E C T E D]

SENATE BILL NO. 788

90TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR JOHNSON.

Read 1st time January 6, 2000, and 1,000 copies ordered printed.

Read 2nd time January 24, 2000, and referred to the Committee on Financial and Governmental Organization.

Reported from the Committee February 1, 2000, with recommendation that the bill do pass and be placed on the Consent Calendar.

Taken up February 10, 2000. Read 3rd time and placed upon its final passage; bill passed.

TERRY L. SPIELER, Secretary.

3148S.02P

AN ACT

To repeal section 105.055, RSMo 1994, and section 105.058, RSMo Supp. 1999, relating to public officers and employees, and to enact in lieu thereof two new sections relating to the same subject.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Section 105.055, RSMo 1994, and section 105.058, RSMo Supp. 1999, are repealed and two new sections enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as sections 105.055 and 105.058, to read as follows:

105.055. 1. No supervisor or appointing authority of any state agency shall prohibit any employee of the agency from discussing the operations of the agency, either specifically or generally, with any member of the legislature or the state auditor.

2. No supervisor or appointing authority of any state agency shall:

(1) Prohibit a state employee from or take any disciplinary action whatsoever against a state employee for the disclosure of any alleged prohibited activity under investigation or any related activity, or for the disclosure of information which the employee reasonably believes evidences:

(a) A violation of any law, rule or regulation; or

(b) Mismanagement, a gross waste of funds or abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, if the disclosure is not specifically prohibited by law; or

EXPLANATION--Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in this bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

(2) Require any such employee to give notice to the supervisor or appointing authority prior to making any such report.

3. This section shall not be construed as:

(1) Prohibiting a supervisor or appointing authority from requiring that an employee inform the supervisor or appointing authority as to legislative requests for information to the agency or the substance of testimony made, or to be made, by the employee to legislators on behalf of the employee to legislators on behalf of the agency;

(2) Permitting an employee to leave the employee's assigned work areas during normal work hours without following applicable rules and regulations and policies pertaining to leaves, unless the employee is requested by a legislator or legislative committee to appear before a legislative committee;

(3) Authorizing an employee to represent the employee's personal opinions as the opinions of a state agency; or

(4) Restricting or precluding disciplinary action taken against a state employee if: the employee [knows the disclosure to be false or which the employee discloses with reckless disregard for its truth or falsity] **knew that the information was false**; the information is closed or is confidential under the provisions of the open meetings law or any other law; or the disclosure relates to the employee's own violations, mismanagement, gross waste of funds, abuse of authority or endangerment of the public health or safety.

4. As used in this section, "disciplinary action" means any dismissal, demotion, transfer, reassignment, suspension, reprimand, warning of possible dismissal or withholding of work, whether or not the withholding of work has affected or will affect the employee's compensation.

5. Any employee may file an administrative appeal whenever the employee alleges that disciplinary action was taken against the employee in violation of this section. The appeal shall be filed with the state personnel advisory board; provided that the appeal shall be filed with the appropriate agency review board or body of nonmerit agency employers which have established appeal procedures substantially similar to those provided for merit employees in subsection 5 of section 36.390, RSMo. The appeal shall be filed within thirty days of the alleged disciplinary action. Procedures governing the appeal shall be in accordance with chapter 36, RSMo. If the board or appropriate review body finds that disciplinary action taken was unreasonable, the board or appropriate review body shall modify or reverse the agency's action and order such relief for the employee as the board considers appropriate. If the board finds a violation of this section, it may review and recommend to the appointing authority that the violator be suspended on leave without pay for not more than thirty days or, in cases of willful or repeated violations, may review and recommend to the appointing authority that the violator forfeit the violator's position as a state officer or employee and disqualify the violator for appointment to or employment as a state officer or employee for a period of not more than two years. The decision of the board or

appropriate review body in such cases may be appealed by any party pursuant to law.

6. Each state agency shall prominently post a copy of this section in locations where it can reasonably be expected to come to the attention of all employees of the agency.

105.058. No state agency and no state official, including the joint committee on legislative research and the oversight division, shall, by agency policy, executive order, ethics codes or any other means, prohibit any state employee from communicating with **the state auditor or** his or her state representative or state senator, nor shall such agency or official require any such employee to provide any record or other information regarding any communications with **the state auditor or** his or her state representative or state senator, except when such communications are directly related to the primary employment duties of such employee.

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