

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

# SENATE BILL NO. 717

90TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

---

---

INTRODUCED BY SENATORS SCHNEIDER AND FLOTRON.

Pre-filed December 15, 1999, and 1,000 copies ordered printed.

2602S.03I

TERRY L. SPIELER, Secretary.

---

---

## AN ACT

To repeal section 105.955, RSMo Supp. 1999, relating to the electronic reporting of public financial reports, and to enact in lieu thereof one new section relating to the same subject.

---

---

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

Section A. Section 105.955, RSMo Supp. 1999, is repealed and one new section enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as section 105.955, to read as follows:

105.955. 1. A bipartisan "Missouri Ethics Commission", composed of six members, is hereby established. The commission shall be assigned to the office of administration with supervision by the office of administration only for budgeting and reporting as provided by subdivisions (4) and (5) of subsection 6 of section 1 of the Reorganization Act of 1974. Supervision by the office of administration shall not extend to matters relating to policies, regulative functions or appeals from decisions of the commission, and the commissioner of administration, any employee of the office of administration, or the governor, either directly or indirectly, shall not participate or interfere with the activities of the commission in any manner not specifically provided by law and shall not in any manner interfere with the budget request of or withhold any moneys appropriated to the commission by the general assembly. All members of the commission shall be appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate from lists submitted pursuant to this section. Each congressional district committee of the political parties having the two highest number of votes cast for their candidate for governor at the last gubernatorial election shall submit two names of eligible nominees for membership on the commission to the governor, and the governor shall select six members from such nominees to serve on the commission.

2. Within thirty days of submission of the person's name to the governor as provided in subsection 1 of this section, and in order to be an eligible nominee for appointment to the commission, a person shall file a financial interest statement in the manner provided by section

105.485 and shall provide the governor, the president pro tempore of the senate, and the commission with a list of all political contributions and the name of the candidate or committee, political party, or continuing committee, as defined in chapter 130, RSMo, to which those contributions were made within the four-year period prior to such appointment, made by the nominee, the nominee's spouse, or any business entity in which the nominee has a substantial interest. The information shall be maintained by the commission and available for public inspection during the period of time during which the appointee is a member of the commission. In order to be an eligible nominee for membership on the commission, a person shall be a citizen and a resident of the state and shall have been a registered voter in the state for a period of at least five years preceding the person's appointment.

3. The term of each member shall be for four years, except that of the members first appointed, the governor shall select three members from even-numbered congressional districts and three members from odd-numbered districts. Not more than three members of the commission shall be members of the same political party, nor shall more than one member be from any one United States congressional district. Not more than two members appointed from the even-numbered congressional districts shall be members of the same political party, and no more than two members from the odd-numbered congressional districts shall be members of the same political party. Of the members first appointed, the terms of the members appointed from the odd-numbered congressional districts shall expire on March 15, 1994, and the terms of the members appointed from the even-numbered congressional districts shall expire on March 15, 1996. Thereafter all successor members of the commission shall be appointed for four-year terms. Terms of successor members of the commission shall expire on March fifteenth of the fourth year of their term. No member of the commission shall serve on the commission after the expiration of the member's term. No person shall be appointed to more than one full four-year term on the commission.

4. Vacancies or expired terms on the commission shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment was made, except as provided in this subsection. Within thirty days of the vacancy or ninety days before the expiration of the term, the names of two eligible nominees for membership on the commission shall be submitted to the governor by the congressional district committees of the political party or parties of the vacating member or members, from the even- or odd-numbered congressional districts, based on the residence of the vacating member or members, other than from the congressional district committees from districts then represented on the commission and from the same congressional district party committee or committees which originally appointed the member or members whose positions are vacated. Appointments to fill vacancies or expired terms shall be made within forty-five days after the deadline for submission of names by the congressional district committees, and shall be subject to the same qualifications for appointment and eligibility as is provided in subsections 2 and 3 of this section. Appointments

to fill vacancies for unexpired terms shall be for the remainder of the unexpired term of the member whom the appointee succeeds, and such appointees shall be eligible for appointment to one full four-year term. If the congressional district committee does not submit the required two nominees within the thirty days or if the congressional district committee does not submit the two nominees within an additional thirty days after receiving notice from the governor to submit the nominees, then the governor may appoint a person or persons who shall be subject to the same qualifications for appointment and eligibility as provided in subsections 2 and 3 of this section.

5. The governor, with the advice and consent of the senate, may remove any member only for substantial neglect of duty, inability to discharge the powers and duties of office, gross misconduct or conviction of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude. Members of the commission also may be removed from office by concurrent resolution of the general assembly signed by the governor. If such resolution receives the vote of two-thirds or more of the membership of both houses of the general assembly, the signature of the governor shall not be necessary to effect removal. The office of any member of the commission who moves from the congressional district from which the member was appointed shall be deemed vacated upon such change of residence.

6. The commission shall elect biennially one of its members as the chairman. The chairman may not succeed himself or herself after two years. No member of the commission shall succeed as chairman any member of the same political party as himself or herself. At least four members are necessary to constitute a quorum, and at least four affirmative votes shall be required for any action or recommendation of the commission.

7. No member or employee of the commission, during the person's term of service, shall hold or be a candidate for any other public office.

8. In the event that a retired judge is appointed as a member of the commission, the judge shall not serve as a special investigator while serving as a member of the commission.

9. No member of the commission shall, during the member's term of service or within one year thereafter:

- (1) Be employed by the state or any political subdivision of the state;
- (2) Be employed as a lobbyist;
- (3) Serve on any other governmental board or commission;
- (4) Be an officer of any political party or political organization;
- (5) Permit the person's name to be used, or make contributions, in support of or in opposition to any candidate or proposition;
- (6) Participate in any way in any election campaign; except that a member or employee of the commission shall retain the right to register and vote in any election, to express the person's opinion privately on political subjects or candidates, to participate in the activities of a civic, community, social, labor or professional organization and to be a member of a political party.

10. Each member of the commission shall receive, as full compensation for the member's services, the sum of one hundred dollars per day for each full day actually spent on work of the commission, and the member's actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of the member's official duties.

11. The commission shall appoint an executive director who shall serve subject to the supervision of and at the pleasure of the commission, but in no event for more than six years. The executive director shall be responsible for the administrative operations of the commission and perform such other duties as may be delegated or assigned to the director by law or by rule of the commission. The executive director shall employ staff and retain such contract services as the director deems necessary, within the limits authorized by appropriations by the general assembly.

12. Beginning on January 1, 1993, all lobbyist registration and expenditure reports filed pursuant to section 105.473, financial interest statements filed pursuant to subdivision (1) of section 105.489, and campaign finance disclosure reports filed other than with election authorities or local election authorities as provided by section 130.026, RSMo, shall be filed with the commission.

13. Within sixty days of the initial meeting of the first commission appointed, the commission shall obtain from the clerk of the supreme court or the state courts administrator a list of retired appellate and circuit court judges who did not leave the judiciary as a result of being defeated in an election. The executive director shall determine those judges who indicate their desire to serve as special investigators and to investigate any and all complaints referred to them by the commission. The executive director shall maintain an updated list of those judges qualified and available for appointment to serve as special investigators. Such list shall be updated at least annually. The commission shall refer complaints to such special investigators on that list on a rotating schedule which ensures a random assignment of each special investigator. Each special investigator shall receive only one unrelated investigation at a time and shall not be assigned to a second or subsequent investigation until all other eligible investigators on the list have been assigned to an investigation. In the event that no special investigator is qualified or available to conduct a particular investigation, the commission may appoint a special investigator to conduct such particular investigation.

14. The commission shall have the following duties and responsibilities relevant to the impartial and effective enforcement of sections 105.450 to 105.496 and chapter 130, RSMo, as provided in sections 105.955 to 105.963:

(1) Receive and review complaints regarding alleged violation of sections 105.450 to 105.496 and chapter 130, RSMo, conduct initial reviews and investigations regarding such complaints as provided herein; refer complaints to appropriate prosecuting authorities and appropriate disciplinary authorities along with recommendations for sanctions; and initiate judicial proceedings as allowed by sections 105.955 to 105.963;

(2) Review and audit any reports and statements required by the campaign finance disclosure laws contained in chapter 130, RSMo, and financial interest disclosure laws or lobbyist registration and reporting laws as provided by sections 105.470 to 105.492, for timeliness, accuracy and completeness of content as provided in sections 105.955 to 105.963;

(3) Develop appropriate systems to file and maintain an index of all such reports and statements to facilitate public access to such information, except as may be limited by confidentiality requirements otherwise provided by law, including cross-checking of information contained in such statements and reports. The commission may enter into contracts with the appropriate filing officers to effectuate such system. Such filing officers shall cooperate as necessary with the commission as reasonable and necessary to effectuate such purposes;

(4) Provide information and assistance to lobbyists, elected and appointed officials, and employees of the state and political subdivisions in carrying out the provisions of sections 105.450 to 105.496 and chapter 130, RSMo;

(5) Make recommendations to the governor and general assembly or any state agency on the need for further legislation with respect to the ethical conduct of public officials and employees and to advise state and local government in the development of local government codes of ethics and methods of disclosing conflicts of interest as the commission may deem appropriate to promote high ethical standards among all elected and appointed officials or employees of the state or any political subdivision thereof and lobbyists;

(6) Render advisory opinions as provided by this section;

(7) Promulgate rules relating to the provisions of sections 105.955 to 105.963 and chapter 130, RSMo. All rules and regulations issued by the commission shall be prospective only in operation;

(8) Request and receive from the officials and entities identified in subdivision (6) of section 105.450 designations of decision-making public servants.

15. In connection with such powers provided by sections 105.955 to 105.963 and chapter 130, RSMo, the commission may:

(1) Subpoena witnesses and compel their attendance and testimony. Subpoenas shall be served and enforced in the same manner provided by section 536.077, RSMo;

(2) Administer oaths and affirmations;

(3) Take evidence and require by subpoena duces tecum the production of books, papers, and other records relating to any matter being investigated or to the performance of the commission's duties or exercise of its powers. Subpoenas duces tecum shall be served and enforced in the same manner provided by section 536.077, RSMo;

(4) Employ such personnel, including legal counsel, and contract for services including legal counsel, within the limits of its appropriation, as it deems necessary provided such legal counsel, either employed or contracted, represents the Missouri ethics commission before any state

agency or before the courts at the request of the Missouri ethics commission. Nothing in this section shall limit the authority of the Missouri ethics commission as provided for in subsection 2 of section 105.961; and

(5) Obtain information from any department, division or agency of the state or any political subdivision reasonably calculated to lead to the discovery of evidence which will reasonably assist the commission in carrying out the duties prescribed in sections 105.955 to 105.963 and chapter 130, RSMo.

16. (1) Upon written request for an advisory opinion received by the commission, and if the commission determines that the person requesting the opinion would be directly affected by the application of law to the facts presented by the requesting person, the commission shall issue a written opinion advising the person who made the request, in response to the person's particular request, regarding any issue that the commission can receive a complaint on pursuant to section 105.957. The commission may decline to issue a written opinion by a vote of four members and shall provide to the requesting person the reason for the refusal in writing. The commission shall give an approximate time frame as to when the written opinion shall be issued. Such advisory opinions shall be issued no later than ninety days from the date of receipt by the commission. Such requests and advisory opinions, deleting the name and identity of the requesting person, shall be compiled and published by the commission on at least an annual basis. Advisory opinions issued by the commission shall be maintained and made available for public inspection and copying at the office of the commission during normal business hours. Any advisory opinion or portion of an advisory opinion rendered pursuant to this subsection shall be withdrawn by the commission if, after hearing thereon, the joint committee on administrative rules finds that such advisory opinion is beyond or contrary to the statutory authority of the commission or is inconsistent with the legislative intent of any law enacted by the general assembly, and after the general assembly, by concurrent resolution, votes to adopt the findings and conclusions of the joint committee on administrative rules. Any such concurrent resolution adopted by the general assembly shall be published at length by the commission in its publication of advisory opinions of the commission next following the adoption of such resolution, and a copy of such concurrent resolution shall be maintained by the commission, along with the withdrawn advisory opinion, in its public file of advisory opinions. The commission shall also send a copy of such resolution to the person who originally requested the withdrawn advisory opinion. Any advisory opinion issued by the ethics commission shall act as legal direction to any person requesting such opinion and no person shall be liable for relying on the opinion and it shall act as a defense of justification against prosecution. An advisory opinion of the commission shall not be withdrawn unless:

- (a) The authorizing statute is declared unconstitutional;
- (b) The opinion goes beyond the power authorized by statute; or

(c) The authorizing statute is changed to invalidate the opinion.

(2) Upon request, the attorney general shall give the attorney general's opinion, without fee, to the commission, any elected official of the state or any political subdivision, any member of the general assembly, or any director of any department, division or agency of the state, upon any question of law regarding the effect or application of sections 105.450 to 105.496, or chapter 130, RSMo. Such opinion need be in writing only upon request of such official, member or director, and in any event shall be rendered within sixty days that such request is delivered to the attorney general.

17. The state auditor and the state auditor's duly authorized employees who have taken the oath of confidentiality required by section 29.070, RSMo, may audit the commission and in connection therewith may inspect materials relating to the functions of the commission. Such audit shall include a determination of whether appropriations were spent within the intent of the general assembly, but shall not extend to review of any file or document pertaining to any particular investigation, audit or review by the commission, an investigator or any staff or person employed by the commission or under the supervision of the commission or an investigator. The state auditor and any employee of the state auditor shall not disclose the identity of any person who is or was the subject of an investigation by the commission and whose identity is not public information as provided by law.

18. From time to time but no more frequently than annually the commission may request the officials and entities described in subdivision (6) of section 105.450 to identify for the commission in writing those persons associated with such office or entity which such office or entity has designated as a decision-making public servant. Each office or entity delineated in subdivision (6) of section 105.450 receiving such a request shall identify those so designated within thirty days of the commission's request.

**19. All functions of the ethics commission regarding the implementation, storage, processing and maintenance of any electronic reporting system pursuant to chapter 105, RSMo and chapter 130, RSMo, shall, effective January 1, 2001, be transferred to the data processing division established pursuant to section 37.110, RSMo, within the office of administration. The ethics commission shall retain its duties provided by law regarding the filing of reports and public access to reports.**

✓