
DIGEST

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LaFleur

HB No. 9

Abstract: Requires an elected or appointed official to file an initial and an annual disclosure statement with the Board of Ethics when such official derives, whether directly or through his spouse or a legal entity in which he or his spouse owns 10% or more, any thing of economic value valued at more than \$2,500 through a contract or subcontract which is related to a gubernatorially declared disaster or emergency and which the official or his spouse knows or reasonably should know is funded or reimbursed with federal funds.

Proposed law requires an elected or appointed official to disclose certain specific information regarding the receipt (whether directly, through his spouse, or through a legal entity in which he or his spouse owns 10% or more) of any thing of economic value valued at more than \$2,500 through a contract or subcontract which is related to a gubernatorially declared disaster or emergency and which the elected official knows or reasonably should know is or may be funded or reimbursed in whole or in part with federal funds. Proposed law prohibits a person from entering into separate contracts or subcontracts valued at \$2,500 or less with the same person or governmental entity or agency thereof as a subterfuge to avoid the disclosure requirements of proposed law. Proposed law requires the following information to be disclosed to the Board of Ethics (ethics board):

- (1) The official's name, address, and office held and if the thing of economic value is derived through a spouse or a legal entity in which the spouse has an ownership interest, the name and address of such person.
- (2) If through a legal entity, the name and business address of the entity, the official's or spouse's ownership interest in the entity, and the position, if any, held by the official or his spouse in the legal entity.
- (3) The nature of the contract or subcontract, including the amount of the contract or subcontract and a description of the goods or services provided or to be provided.
- (4) The amount of income or value of any thing of economic value derived through the contract or subcontract by the official or his spouse for the previous calendar year (except as provided for initial statements).

Proposed law requires an initial disclosure statement containing all of the information specified above to be filed with the ethics board no later than 30 days after the effective date of proposed law or 15 days after the official, spouse, or legal entity enters into the contract or subcontract, whichever occurs later. Specifies instead of disclosing the actual amount of income or value of

any thing of economic value derived from the contract or subcontract for the previous calendar year, the official shall include the amount of income or value of any thing of economic value to be derived or reasonably expected to be derived from the contract or subcontract for the first calendar year of the contract or subcontract. Proposed law then requires annual disclosure statements to be filed no later than February 15 of each year that include information for the previous calendar year. Proposed law requires such disclosure statements to be filed until a disclosure statement is filed after the completion of the contract or subcontract or until the person filing the statements is no longer an elected or appointed official, whichever occurs first.

Proposed law specifies that annual disclosure statements shall not be required for the receipt of things of economic value pursuant to contracts or subcontracts entered into prior to an elected or appointed official taking office. However, provides that if an elected or appointed official or spouse of such a person receives or reasonably expects to receive a thing of economic value otherwise required to be disclosed by proposed law pursuant to the renewal of such a contract or subcontract occurring after he takes office, such official shall file a disclosure statement no later than 15 days after such renewal in accordance with the provisions of proposed law requiring an initial disclosure statement and annually thereafter in accordance with proposed law.

Proposed law specifies that all disclosure statements filed pursuant to proposed law are public records.

Proposed law provides that failure to file a statement, failure to timely file a statement, failure to disclose required information, filing a false statement, or engaging in a subterfuge to avoid the disclosure requirements shall subject a person to penalties as provided in the Code of Governmental Ethics (present law). Additionally imposes penalties of \$100 per day for failure to file, knowingly and willfully failing to timely file, or knowingly and willfully failing to disclose or accurately disclose any information required for each day until the statement or required accurate information is filed. Specifies that whoever enters into separate contracts or subcontracts valued at \$2,500 or less as a subterfuge to avoid the disclosure requirements of proposed law shall be subject to the penalties of present law (R.S. 42:1153--which provides that the ethics board may impose a fine of up to \$10,000 and other types of penalties).

Proposed law defines for its purposes the term "appointed state official" or "appointed official" as a person holding an office in any branch of state government or other position on a state agency, board, or commission or any executive office of any state agency, board, commission, or department which is specifically established or specifically authorized by the constitution or laws of this state or by executive order of the governor and which is filled by appointment or election by an elected or appointed public official or by a governmental body composed of such officials of this state.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 42:1114.3)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on House and Governmental Affairs to the original bill.

1. Additionally requires appointed state officials to disclose the receipt of certain things of economic value as provided in proposed law and defines "appointed state officials" and "appointed official" for such purposes.
2. Additionally requires an elected or appointed official to disclose the receipt of certain things of economic value received through the spouse of such an official or through any legal entity in which the spouse owns 10% or more.