
DIGEST

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HB 496 Original

2021 Regular Session

Harris

Abstract: Requires elected judges, justices of the peace, and candidates for such offices to file financial disclosure statements that disclose the same information required of filers of Tier 2 disclosures pursuant to the Code of Governmental Ethics (ethics code), requires the judicial administrator to transmit those statements to the Bd. of Ethics (board), and requires those statements to be available to the public via the board's website.

Proposed law requires all elected judges and judicial candidates to file financial disclosure statements with the judicial administrator of the supreme court, which statements shall disclose the same information required to be disclosed by certain public servants and certain candidates by present law (ethics code—R.S. 42:1124.2 (Tier 2 filers) and the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act—R.S. 18:1495.7) and for the same time periods and by the same deadlines as apply to those statements. Defines "elected judge" and "judicial candidate" for such purposes.

Proposed law requires the judicial administrator of the supreme court to electronically transmit to the board each financial disclosure statement filed by an elected judge or a judicial candidate with his office no later than seven business days after receipt of the financial disclosure statement. Requires the judicial administrator to maintain an up-to-date list of judges and judicial candidates who have failed to file, failed to timely file, failed to provide omitted information, or failed to provide accurate information on a financial disclosure statement required by proposed law. Provides that the failure of the judicial administrator to transmit a financial disclosure statement or up-to-date list to the board in the manner and within the time period required by proposed law constitutes a violation of the Code of Governmental Ethics (ethics code) by the judicial administrator and each such violation shall be subject to the enforcement procedures and penalties provided for in the ethics code. Present law penalties for violations of the ethics code and certain other laws within the board's jurisdiction by public employees and other persons include removal, suspension, reduction in pay, or demotion and/or a fine of up to \$10,000.

Proposed law requires the board to make each financial disclosure statement and the most up-to-date list of those who have failed to comply with proposed law available to the public via the internet on its website no later than seven business days after receipt from the judicial administrator.

Proposed law further requires the judicial administrator, no later than Oct. 1, 2021, to electronically transmit to the board a copy of each financial disclosure statement that was filed with his office by judges and candidates for judicial office prior to Aug. 1, 2021, (effective date of proposed law). Requires the board to make each such financial disclosure statement available to the public via the internet on its website no later than 60 business days after receipt of the financial disclosure

statement from the judicial administrator. Specifies that all financial disclosure statements filed with the judicial administrator of the supreme court on and after Aug. 1, 2021, shall be transmitted and made available to the public in the manner provided by proposed law. Further specifies that on and after Jan. 1, 2022, the content of all financial disclosure statements filed by elected judges and judicial candidates

shall be in compliance with the provisions of proposed law. Additionally provides that the supreme court may adopt or amend rules as it deems necessary for the effective implementation and enforcement of the provisions of proposed law.

(Adds R.S. 13:11-13)