

Senate Bill 517

By: Senators Smith of the 52nd, Lee of the 29th, Shafer of the 48th, Gillis of the 20th, Starr of the 44th and others

**AS PASSED SENATE**

**A BILL TO BE ENTITLED**

**AN ACT**

1 To amend Chapter 5 of Title 21 and Titles 36, 42, and 45 of the Official Code of Georgia  
 2 Annotated, relating, respectively, to ethics in government; local government; penal  
 3 institutions; and public officers, so as to provide for the comprehensive revision of provisions  
 4 regarding ethics and conflicts of interest; to provide for and change certain definitions; to  
 5 change certain provisions relative to declaration of policy; to provide for the timely issuance  
 6 of advisory opinions by the State Ethics Commission and other matters relative to advisory  
 7 opinions; to change provisions relating to the State Ethics Commission including its  
 8 administrative attachment to the Secretary of State's office; to change provisions relating to  
 9 mailing complaints; to provide for rule making with regard to technical defects and the time  
 10 frame for correction of technical defects in financial disclosure statements; to change certain  
 11 provisions regarding connected organizations; to create certain restrictions on receipt or  
 12 award of state contracts; to change certain provisions regarding contributions made to  
 13 candidates and the location where certain reports are filed; to change provisions relating to  
 14 contributions or expenditures other than through candidates or campaign committees and  
 15 disclosure of extensions of credit; to change certain provisions regarding disclosure reports;  
 16 to change certain provisions relating to disposition of campaign contributions; to change  
 17 certain provisions regarding electronic filing of reports; to change certain provisions relating  
 18 to acceptance of campaign contributions during legislative sessions; to change certain  
 19 provisions relating to filing of financial disclosure statements; to change provisions relating  
 20 to filing by mail; to change certain provisions relating to lobbyist registration; to change  
 21 provisions relating to lobbyist disclosure reports and the contents thereof and the definition  
 22 of lobbyist; to create provisions relating to a lobbyist's eligibility for certain appointments  
 23 and ability to serve as a public employee; to create conflict of interest provisions relating to  
 24 gifts; to provide restrictions for lobbyists relating to contingency agreements; to provide for  
 25 restrictions for lobbyists relating to presence on the floor of the House and Senate; to provide  
 26 for candidates for the General Assembly who file a declaration of intent to accept campaign  
 27 contributions to receive and choose to sign a pledge to engage in ethical campaigning; to  
 28 provide for actions for slander and libel and the commission's authority over such activity;

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1 to correct cross-references; to provide for criminal penalties; to change provisions relative  
 2 to appearances before the Board of Pardons and Paroles by members of the General  
 3 Assembly or state elected or appointed officials; to change certain provisions relating to  
 4 complaints or information regarding fraud, waste, and abuse in state programs and  
 5 operations; to change certain provisions relating to the code of ethics for members of boards,  
 6 commissions, and authorities; to change provisions relating to a board, commission, or  
 7 authority's authority to enact rules and regulations; to provide for restrictions on activities  
 8 for persons who were a member, employee, or appointee of the legislative, executive, or  
 9 judicial branch or other agencies or authorities of the state; to provide for penalties; to  
 10 provide for restrictions on the Governor's appointment power under certain circumstances;  
 11 to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

13 **SECTION 1.**

14 Chapter 5 of Title 21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to ethics in  
 15 government, is amended by striking Code Section 21-5-2, relating to declaration of policy,  
 16 and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

17 "21-5-2.

18 It is declared to be the policy of this state, in furtherance of its responsibility to protect the  
 19 integrity of the democratic process and to ensure fair elections for constitutional offices;  
 20 state offices; district attorneys; members of the Georgia House of Representatives and  
 21 Georgia Senate; all constitutional judicial officers; and all county and municipal elected  
 22 officials, to institute and establish a requirement of public disclosure of campaign  
 23 contributions and expenditures relative to the seeking of such offices, to the recall of public  
 24 officers holding elective office, and to the influencing of voter approval or rejection of a  
 25 proposed constitutional amendment, a state-wide referendum, or a proposed question which  
 26 is to appear on the ballot in any county or municipal election. Further, it is the policy of this  
 27 state that the state's public affairs will be best served by disclosures of significant private  
 28 interests of public officers and officials which may influence the discharge of their public  
 29 duties and responsibilities. The General Assembly further finds that it is for the public to  
 30 determine whether significant private interests of public officers have influenced the state's  
 31 public officers to the detriment of their public duties and responsibilities and, in order to  
 32 make that determination and hold the public officers accountable, the public must have  
 33 reasonable access to the disclosure of the significant private interests of the public officers  
 34 of this state."

**SECTION 2.**

Said chapter is further amended by striking Code Section 21-5-3, relating to definitions, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

"21-5-3.

As used in this chapter, the term:

(1) 'Business entity' means any corporation, sole proprietorship, partnership, limited partnership, limited liability company, enterprise, franchise, association, trust, joint venture, or other entity, whether profit or nonprofit.

(2) 'Campaign committee' means the candidate, person, or committee which accepts contributions or makes expenditures designed to bring about the nomination or election of an individual to any elected office. The term 'campaign committee' also means any person or committee which accepts contributions or makes expenditures designed to bring about the recall of a public officer holding elective office or to oppose the recall of a public officer holding elective office or any person or any committee which accepts contributions or makes expenditures designed to bring about the approval or rejection by the voters of any proposed constitutional amendment, a state-wide referendum, or a proposed question which is to appear on the ballot in any county or municipal election.

(3) 'Campaign contribution disclosure report' means a report filed with the appropriate filing officer by a candidate or the chairperson or treasurer of a campaign committee setting forth all expenditures of \$101.00 or more and all contributions of \$101.00 or more, including contributions and expenditures of lesser amounts when the aggregate amount thereof by or to a person is \$101.00 or more for the calendar year in which the report is filed. Such report shall also include the total amount of all individual contributions received or expenditures made of less than \$101.00 each. The first report required in the calendar year of the election shall contain all such expenditures made and all such contributions received by the candidate or the committee in prior years in support of the campaign in question.

(4) 'Candidate' means an individual who seeks nomination for election or election to any public office, whether or not such an individual is elected; and a person shall be deemed to seek nomination or election if such person has taken necessary action under the laws of this state to qualify such person for nomination for election or election or has received contributions or made expenditures in pursuit of such nomination or election or has given such person's consent for such person's campaign committee to receive contributions or make expenditures with a view to bringing about such person's nomination for election or election to such office.

(5) 'Commission' means the State Ethics Commission created under Code Section 21-5-4.

1 (6) 'Connected organization' means any organization, including any corporation, labor  
 2 organization, membership organization, or cooperative, which is not a political action  
 3 committee, as defined in this chapter, but which, directly or indirectly, establishes or  
 4 administers a political action committee or which provides more than 40 percent of the  
 5 funds of the political action committee for a calendar year.

6 ~~(6)~~(7) 'Contribution' means a gift, subscription, membership, loan, forgiveness of debt,  
 7 advance or deposit of money or anything of value conveyed or transferred for the purpose  
 8 of influencing the nomination for election or election of any person for office, bringing  
 9 about the recall of a public officer holding elective office or opposing the recall of a  
 10 public officer holding elective office, or the influencing of voter approval or rejection of  
 11 a proposed constitutional amendment, a state-wide referendum, or a proposed question  
 12 which is to appear on the ballot in any county or municipal election. The term specifically  
 13 shall not include the value of personal services performed by persons who serve without  
 14 compensation from any ~~sources~~ source and on a voluntary basis. The term 'contribution'  
 15 shall include other forms of payment made to candidates for office or who hold office  
 16 when such fees and compensation made can be reasonably construed as a campaign  
 17 contribution designed to encourage or influence a candidate or public officer holding  
 18 elective office. The term 'contribution' shall also encompass transactions wherein a  
 19 qualifying fee required of the candidate is furnished or paid by anyone other than the  
 20 candidate.

21 ~~(7)~~(8) 'Direct ownership interest' means the holding or possession of good legal or  
 22 rightful title of property or the holding or enjoyment of real or beneficial use of the  
 23 property by any person and includes any interest owned or held by a spouse of such  
 24 person if such interest is held jointly or as tenants in common between the person and  
 25 spouse.

26 ~~(8)~~(9) 'Election' means a primary election; run-off election, either primary or general;  
 27 special election; or general election. The term 'election' also means a recall election.

28 ~~(8.1)~~(10) 'Election cycle' means the period from the day following the date of an election  
 29 or appointment of a person to elective public office through and including the date of the  
 30 next such election of a person to the same public office and shall be construed and  
 31 applied separately for each elective office.

32 ~~(9)~~(11) 'Expenditure' means a purchase, payment, distribution, loan, advance, deposit,  
 33 or gift of money or anything of value made for the purpose of influencing the nomination  
 34 for election or election of any person, bringing about the recall of a public officer holding  
 35 elective office or opposing the recall of a public officer holding elective office, or the  
 36 influencing of voter approval or rejection of a proposed constitutional amendment, a  
 37 state-wide referendum, or a proposed question which is to appear on the ballot in any

1 county or municipal election. The term specifically shall not include the value of personal  
 2 services performed by persons who serve without compensation from any source and on  
 3 a voluntary basis. The term 'expenditure' shall also include the payment of a qualifying  
 4 fee for and in behalf of a candidate.

5 ~~(10)~~(12) 'Fiduciary position' means any position imposing a duty to act primarily for the  
 6 benefit of another person as an officer, director, manager, partner, or other designation  
 7 of general responsibility of a business entity.

8 ~~(11)~~(13) 'Filing officer' means that official who is designated in Code Section 21-5-34  
 9 to receive campaign contribution disclosure reports; ~~provided, however, that such term~~  
 10 ~~shall not include the State Ethics Commission.~~

11 ~~(12)~~ 'Gift' means any gratuitous transfer to a public officer, the spouse of the public  
 12 officer, or any dependents of the public officer or a loan of property or services which is  
 13 not a contribution as defined in paragraph (6) of this Code section and which is in the  
 14 amount of \$101.00 or more.

15 ~~(12.1)~~(14) 'Independent committee' means any committee, club, association, partnership,  
 16 corporation, labor union, or other group of persons, other than a campaign committee,  
 17 political party, or political action committee, which receives donations during a calendar  
 18 year from persons who are members or supporters of the committee and which expends  
 19 such funds either for the purpose of affecting the outcome of an election for any elected  
 20 office or to advocate the election or defeat of any particular candidate.

21 ~~(13)~~(15) 'Intangible property' means property which is not real property and which is  
 22 held for profit and includes stocks, bonds, interest in partnerships, choses in action, and  
 23 other investments but shall not include any ownership interest in any public or private  
 24 retirement or pension fund, account, or system and shall not include any ownership  
 25 interest in any public or private life insurance contract or any benefit, value, or proceeds  
 26 of such life insurance contract.

27 (16) 'Ordinary and necessary expenses' shall include, without limitation, reasonable  
 28 expenditures made during the reporting period for office costs and rent, lodging,  
 29 equipment, travel, advertising, postage, staff salaries, consultants, files storage, polling,  
 30 special events, volunteers, reimbursements to volunteers, contributions to nonprofit  
 31 organizations, and flowers for special occasions, which shall include, but are not limited  
 32 to, birthdays and funerals, and any other expenditure that is deemed appropriate for the  
 33 purposes of Code Section 21-5-33. In determining whether an expense is ordinary and  
 34 necessary in compliance with subsection (a) of Code Section 21-5-33 or whether an  
 35 expense constitutes an improper conversion of campaign contributions to personal assets  
 36 under subsection (c) of Code Section 21-5-33, candidates, campaign committees, and the  
 37 commission may be guided by the provisions of 2 U.S.C.A. Section 439a(b), as it existed

1 on January 10, 2004, and 11 C.F.R. Section 113.1(g), as it existed on January 10, 2004,  
 2 relating to prohibited personal uses of campaign contributions for candidates for federal  
 3 office and federal officeholders.

4 ~~(14)~~(17) 'Person' means an individual, partnership, committee, association, corporation,  
 5 limited liability company, limited liability partnership, trust, labor organization, or any  
 6 other organization or group of persons.

7 ~~(14.1)~~(18) 'Political action committee' means:

8 (A) Any any committee, club, association, partnership, corporation, labor union, or  
 9 other group of persons which receives donations during a calendar year from persons  
 10 who are members or supporters of the committee and which distributes these funds as  
 11 contributions to one or more candidates for public office or campaign committees of  
 12 candidates for public office; and

13 (B) A a 'separate segregated fund' as defined in Code Section 21-5-40.

14 Such term does not include a campaign committee.

15 ~~(14.2)~~(19) 'Public employee' means every person employed by the executive, legislative,  
 16 or judicial branch of state government, or any department, board, bureau, agency,  
 17 commission, or authority thereof.

18 ~~(15)~~(20) 'Public officer' means:

19 (A) Every constitutional officer;

20 (B) Every elected state official;

21 (C) The executive head of every state department or agency, whether elected or  
 22 appointed;

23 (D) Each member of the General Assembly;

24 (E) The executive director of each state board or authority and the members thereof;

25 (F) Every elected county official and every elected member of a local board of  
 26 education; and

27 (G) Every elected municipal official."

### 28 SECTION 3.

29 Said chapter is further amended by striking Code Section 21-5-5, relating to operating  
 30 expenses, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

31 "21-5-5.

32 The funds necessary to carry out this chapter shall come from the funds appropriated to and  
 33 available to the State Ethics Commission and from any other available funds. The  
 34 commission shall be a budget unit as defined in Part 1 of Article 4 of Chapter 12 of Title  
 35 45, the 'Budget Act'; provided, however, the commission shall be assigned for  
 36 administrative purposes only to the Secretary of State."

**SECTION 4.**

Said chapter is further amended by striking Code Section 21-5-6, relating to powers and duties of the commission, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

"21-5-6.

(a) The commission is vested with the following powers:

(1) To meet at such times and places as it may deem necessary;

(2) To contract with other agencies, public or private, or persons as it deems necessary for the rendering and affording of such services, facilities, studies, and reports to the commission as will best assist it to carry out its duties and responsibilities;

(3) To cooperate with and secure the cooperation of every department, agency, or instrumentality in the state government or its political subdivisions in the furtherance of the purposes of this chapter and Code Sections 45-10-3 and 45-10-4 and Part 1 of Article 2 of Chapter 10 of Title 45;

(4) To employ an executive secretary and such additional staff as the commission deems necessary to carry out the powers delegated to the commission by this chapter and Code Sections 45-10-3 and 45-10-4 and Part 1 of Article 2 of Chapter 10 of Title 45;

(5) To issue subpoenas to compel any person to appear, give sworn testimony, or produce documentary or other evidence;

(6) To institute and prosecute actions in the superior courts, in its own name, seeking to enjoin or restrain any violation or threatened violation of this chapter;

(7) To adopt in accordance with Chapter 13 of Title 50, the 'Georgia Administrative Procedure Act,' such rules and regulations as are necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter; and

(8) To do any and all things necessary or convenient to enable it to perform wholly and adequately its duties and to exercise the power granted to it.

(b) The commission shall have the following duties:

(1) To prescribe forms to be used in complying with this chapter;

(2) To prepare and publish a manual setting forth recommended uniform methods of accounting and reporting for use by persons required by this chapter to file statements and reports;

(3) To accept and file any information voluntarily supplied that exceeds the requirements of this chapter;

(4) To develop a filing, coding, and cross-indexing system consonant with the purposes of this chapter;

(5) To adopt a retention standard for records of the commission in accordance with Article 5 of Chapter 18 of Title 50, the 'Georgia Records Act';

1 (6) To prepare and publish such other reports and technical studies as in its judgment will  
2 tend to promote the purposes of this chapter;

3 (7) To provide for public dissemination of such summaries and reports;

4 (8) To determine whether the required statements and reports have been filed and, if so,  
5 whether they conform to the requirements of this chapter;

6 (9) To make investigations, subject to the limitations contained in Code Section 21-5-7,  
7 with respect to the statements and reports filed under this chapter and with respect to  
8 alleged failure to file any statements or reports required under this chapter and upon  
9 receipt of the written complaint of any person, verified under oath to the best information,  
10 knowledge, and belief by the person making such complaint with respect to an alleged  
11 violation of any provision of this chapter, provided that nothing in this Code section shall  
12 be construed to limit or encumber the right of the commission to initiate on probable  
13 cause an investigation on its own cognizance as it deems necessary to fulfill its  
14 obligations under this chapter;

15 (10)(A) To conduct a preliminary investigation, subject to the limitations contained in  
16 Code Section 21-5-7, of the merits of a written complaint by any person who believes  
17 that a violation of this chapter has occurred, verified under oath to the best information,  
18 knowledge, and belief by the person making such complaint. If there are found no  
19 reasonable grounds to believe that a violation has occurred, the complaint shall be  
20 dismissed, subject to being reopened upon discovery of additional evidence or relevant  
21 material. If the commission determines that there are such reasonable grounds to  
22 believe that a violation has occurred, it shall give notice by summoning the persons  
23 believed to have committed the violation to a hearing. The hearing shall be conducted  
24 in all respects in accordance with Chapter 13 of Title 50, the 'Georgia Administrative  
25 Procedure Act.' The commission may file a complaint charging violations of this  
26 chapter, and any person aggrieved by the final decision of the commission is entitled  
27 to judicial review in accordance with Chapter 13 of Title 50; provided, however, that  
28 nothing in this Code section shall be construed to limit or encumber the right of the  
29 commission to initiate on probable cause an investigation on its own cognizance as it  
30 deems necessary to fulfill its obligations under this chapter.

31 (B) In any such preliminary investigation referenced in subparagraph (A) of this  
32 paragraph, until such time as the commission determines that there are reasonable  
33 grounds to believe that a violation has occurred, it shall not be necessary to give the  
34 notice by summons nor to conduct a hearing in accordance with Chapter 13 of Title 50,  
35 the 'Georgia Administrative Procedure Act';

36 (11) To report suspected violations of law to the appropriate law enforcement authority;



1 (12) To investigate upon a written complaint any illegal use of ~~state~~ public employees  
2 in a political campaign by any candidate;

3 (13)To investigate upon a written complaint any false, dishonest, or misleading  
4 statements made by public officers of this state in the course of his or her official duties  
5 and service as an officer of a governmental entity;

6 (14) To issue, upon written request, and publish advisory opinions on the requirements  
7 of this chapter and Code Sections 45-10-3 and 45-10-4 and Part 1 of Article 2 of Chapter  
8 10 of Title 45, based on a real or hypothetical set of circumstances; and each such  
9 advisory opinion shall be issued within 30 days of the written request for the advisory  
10 opinion;

11 (15) To issue orders, after the completion of appropriate proceedings, directing  
12 compliance with this chapter or Code Sections 45-10-3 and 45-10-4 and Part 1 of Article  
13 2 of Chapter 10 of Title 45 or prohibiting the actual or threatened commission of any  
14 conduct constituting a violation, which order may include a provision requiring the  
15 violator:

16 (A) To cease and desist from committing further violations;

17 (B) To make public complete statements, in corrected form, containing the information  
18 required by this chapter;

19 (C)(i) To pay a civil penalty not to exceed ~~\$1,000.00~~ \$10,000.00 for each violation  
20 contained in any report required by this chapter or for each failure to comply with any  
21 other provision of this chapter or Code Sections 45-10-3 and 45-10-4 and Part 1 of  
22 Article 2 of Chapter 10 of Title 45 or of any rule or regulation promulgated under this  
23 chapter.

24 (ii) A civil penalty shall not be assessed against any person except after notice and  
25 hearing as provided by Chapter 13 of Title 50, the 'Georgia Administrative Procedure  
26 Act.' The amount of any civil penalty finally assessed shall be recoverable by a civil  
27 action brought in the name of the commission. All moneys recovered pursuant to this  
28 Code section shall be deposited in the state treasury.

29 (iii) The Attorney General of this state shall, upon complaint by the commission, or  
30 may, upon the Attorney General's own initiative if after examination of the complaint  
31 and evidence the Attorney General believes a violation has occurred, bring an action  
32 in the superior court in the name of the commission for a temporary restraining order  
33 or other injunctive relief or for civil penalties assessed against any person violating  
34 any provision of this chapter or Code Sections 45-10-3 and 45-10-4 and Part 1 of  
35 Article 2 of Chapter 10 of Title 45 or any rule or regulation duly issued by the  
36 commission.

1 (iv) Any action brought by the Attorney General to enforce civil penalties assessed  
 2 against any person for violating the provisions of this chapter or Code Sections  
 3 45-10-3 and 45-10-4 and Part 1 of Article 2 of Chapter 10 of Title 45 or any rule or  
 4 regulation duly issued by the commission or any order issued by the commission  
 5 ordering compliance or to cease and desist from further violations shall be brought in  
 6 the superior court of the county of the residence of the party against whom relief is  
 7 sought. Service of process shall lie in any jurisdiction within the state. In such actions,  
 8 the superior court inquiry will be limited to whether notice was given by the  
 9 commission to the violator in compliance with the Constitution and the rules of  
 10 procedure of Chapter 13 of Title 50, the 'Georgia Administrative Procedure Act.'  
 11 Upon satisfaction that notice was given and a hearing was held pursuant to Chapter  
 12 13 of Title 50, the 'Georgia Administrative Procedure Act,' the superior court shall  
 13 enforce the orders of the commission and the civil penalties assessed under this  
 14 chapter and the superior court shall not make independent inquiry as to whether the  
 15 violations have occurred.

16 (v) In any action brought by the Attorney General to enforce any of the provisions  
 17 of this chapter or of any rule or regulation issued by the commission, the judgment,  
 18 if in favor of the commission, shall provide that the defendant pay to the commission  
 19 the costs, including reasonable attorneys' fees, incurred by the commission in the  
 20 prosecution of such action;

21 (16) To make public its conclusion that a violation has occurred and the nature of such  
 22 violation;

23 (17) To petition the superior court within the county where the hearing was or is being  
 24 conducted for the enforcement of any order issued in connection with such hearing; ~~and~~

25 (18) To report to the General Assembly and the Governor at the close of each fiscal year  
 26 concerning the action taken during that time, the names, salaries, and duties of all  
 27 individuals employed, and the funds disbursed and to make such further report on the  
 28 matters within its jurisdiction as may appear desirable; and

29 (18) To carry out the procedures, duties, and obligations relative to the commission set  
 30 forth in Code Sections 45-10-3 and 45-10-4 and Part 1 of Article 2 of Chapter 10 of Title  
 31 45.

32 ~~(c) The Secretary of State, through the Secretary of State's office, shall perform the~~  
 33 ~~ministerial functions which the commission may require. The office of the Secretary of~~  
 34 ~~State shall be designated as the place where members of the public may file papers or~~  
 35 ~~correspond with the commission and receive any form or instruction from the commission.~~  
 36 ~~The Secretary of State or the Secretary of State's designee shall serve as secretary to the~~  
 37 ~~commission.~~

1 (c) In any matter pending before the commission, if a member of the commission has  
 2 made or caused to be made a contribution in the current or immediately preceding election  
 3 cycle to any respondent, any other party to the complaint, any candidate who opposed the  
 4 respondent in any election in the current or immediately preceding election cycle, or the  
 5 campaign committee of any of the foregoing, that member shall recuse himself or herself  
 6 from consideration of the matter. The commission may, upon motion, order the recusal of  
 7 a member.

8 (d) The State Ethics Commission shall have the same powers and duties with respect to  
 9 Code Sections 45-10-3 and 45-10-4 and Part 1 of Article 2 of Chapter 10 of Title 45 as the  
 10 commission has with respect to this chapter.

11 (e) The Attorney General shall have the same powers and duties with respect to Code  
 12 Sections 45-10-3 and 45-10-4 and Part 1 of Article 2 of Chapter 10 of Title 45 as the  
 13 Attorney General has with respect to this chapter. Without limiting the generality of the  
 14 foregoing it is specifically provided that the Attorney General may bring civil actions for  
 15 the enforcement of Code Sections 45-10-3 and 45-10-4 and Part 1 of Article 2 of Chapter  
 16 10 of Title 45 in the same general manner as provided in this chapter."

#### 17 **SECTION 5.**

18 Said chapter is further amended by striking Code Section 21-5-7, relating to initiation of  
 19 complaints, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

20 "21-5-7.

21 (a) The commission shall not initiate any investigation or inquiry into any matter under its  
 22 jurisdiction based upon the complaint of any person unless that person shall reduce the  
 23 same in writing and verify the same under oath to the best information, knowledge, and  
 24 belief of such person, the falsification of which shall be punishable as false swearing under  
 25 Code Section 16-10-71. The person against whom any complaint is made shall be  
 26 furnished by hand delivery or statutory overnight delivery or mailed by certified mail,  
 27 return receipt requested, a copy of the complaint by the commission immediately upon the  
 28 commission's receipt of such complaint and prior to any other public dissemination of such  
 29 complaint. Nothing in this Code section, however, shall be construed to limit or encumber  
 30 the right of the commission to initiate on probable cause an investigation on its own  
 31 cognizance as it deems necessary to fulfill its obligations under this chapter.

32 ~~(b) The commission shall adopt rules which shall provide that:~~

33 ~~(1) Upon the commission's receipt of a complaint, a determination shall be made as to~~  
 34 ~~whether the complaint relates to an alleged technical defect in a filing. For this purpose,~~  
 35 ~~a technical defect shall be a defect such as a failure to include a date or an incorrect date,~~  
 36 ~~a failure to include a contributor's occupation or an incorrect occupation, a failure to~~

1 ~~include an address or an incorrect address, or any other similar technical defect as~~  
 2 ~~specified by rule of the commission;~~

3 ~~(2) When the commission determines that a complaint relates to a technical defect in a~~  
 4 ~~filing, the subject of the complaint shall be given a period of ten days to correct the~~  
 5 ~~alleged technical defect. During such ten-day period the complaint shall be considered~~  
 6 ~~as received by the commission but not yet filed with the commission. If during such~~  
 7 ~~ten-day period the alleged technical violation is cured by an amended filing or otherwise,~~  
 8 ~~or if during such ten-day period the subject of the complaint demonstrates that there is~~  
 9 ~~no technical violation as alleged, the complaint shall be disposed of without filing or~~  
 10 ~~further proceedings and no penalty shall be imposed."~~

### 11 **SECTION 6.**

12 Said chapter is further amended by inserting a new Code Section 21-5-7.1 to follow Code  
 13 Section 21-5-7 to read as follows:

14 "21-5-7.1.

15 The commission shall adopt rules which shall provide that:

16 (1) Upon the commission's receipt of a complaint, a determination shall be made as to  
 17 whether the complaint relates to an alleged technical defect in a filing. For this purpose,  
 18 a technical defect shall be a defect such as a failure to include a date or an incorrect date,  
 19 a failure to include a contributor's occupation or an incorrect occupation, a failure to  
 20 include an address or an incorrect address, or any other similar technical defect as  
 21 specified by rule of the commission;

22 (2) When the commission determines that a complaint relates to a technical defect in a  
 23 filing, the subject of the complaint shall be issued a notice of an alleged technical defect  
 24 by certified mail, return receipt requested, or statutory overnight delivery and shall be  
 25 given a period of 30 calendar days from the receipt of the notice to correct the alleged  
 26 technical defect. During the 30 day period the complaint shall be considered as received  
 27 by the commission but not yet filed with the commission and shall not be considered a  
 28 violation of this chapter. If during the 30 day period the alleged technical violation is  
 29 cured by an amended filing or otherwise or if during the 30 day period the subject of the  
 30 complaint demonstrates that there is no technical violation as alleged, the complaint shall  
 31 be disposed of without filing or further proceedings and no penalty shall be imposed. If  
 32 the subject of the complaint fails to respond to the notice of an alleged technical defect,  
 33 make an amended filing, or demonstrate that there is no technical violation as alleged by  
 34 the thirty-first day, the commission shall impose and collect an administrative fee not to  
 35 exceed \$50.00 per technical defect. If the subject of the complaint does not pay the  
 36 administrative fee, if any, and does not otherwise also comply with this paragraph by the

1 sixtieth day from the receipt of the notice of an alleged technical defect, the commission  
 2 shall conduct further investigation and the complaint may proceed further in accordance  
 3 with the provisions of this chapter; and

4 (3) When the commission determines in its discretion that best efforts have been made  
 5 to complete a required filing, said filing shall be considered in compliance with this  
 6 chapter and any complaint relative to said filing shall be dismissed."

7 **SECTION 7.**

8 Said chapter is further amended by striking Code Section 21-5-12, relating to connected  
 9 organizations, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

10 "21-5-12.

11 ~~(a) As used in this Code section, the term 'connected organization' means any organization,~~  
 12 ~~including any corporation, labor organization, membership organization, or cooperative,~~  
 13 ~~which is not a political action committee, as defined in this article, but which, directly or~~  
 14 ~~indirectly, establishes or administers a political action committee or which provides more~~  
 15 ~~than 40 percent of the funds of the political action committee for a calendar year.~~

16 ~~(b)~~(a) The name of each political action committee shall include the name of its connected  
 17 organization.

18 ~~(c)~~(b) The name of any separate segregated fund, as defined in Code Section 21-5-40, shall  
 19 include the name of its connected organization."

20 **SECTION 8.**

21 Said chapter is further amended by inserting a new Code Section 21-5-13 to follow Code  
 22 Section 21-5-12 to read as follows:

23 "21-5-13.

24 (a) No elected public officer or employee or agent of an elected public officer shall  
 25 advocate for or cause the receipt or award of any state contract to a person who has made  
 26 a campaign contribution to the elected public officer or the elected public officer's  
 27 campaign committee in the current or immediately preceding election cycle.

28 (b) No elected public officer or employee or agent of an elected public officer shall  
 29 advocate for or cause the receipt or award of any state contract to any person who employs  
 30 the elected public officer."

31 **SECTION 9.**

32 Said chapter is further amended by striking Code Section 21-5-30, relating to contributions  
 33 made to a candidate or a campaign committee or for the recall of a public officer, and  
 34 inserting in lieu thereof the following:

1 "21-5-30.

2 (a) Except as provided in subsection (e) of Code Section 21-5-31 ~~21-5-31~~ 21-5-34, no contributions  
3 to bring about the nomination or election of a candidate for any office shall be made except  
4 directly to a candidate or such candidate's campaign committee which is organized for the  
5 purpose of bringing about the nomination or election of any such candidate; and no  
6 contributions to bring about the recall of a public officer or to oppose the recall of a public  
7 officer or to bring about the approval or rejection by the voters of a proposed constitutional  
8 amendment, state-wide referendum, or other issue at the municipal or county level shall be  
9 accepted except directly by a campaign committee organized for that purpose.

10 (b) Each candidate shall maintain records and file reports as required by this chapter or  
11 shall have a campaign committee for the purposes of maintaining records and filing reports  
12 as required by this chapter. Every campaign committee shall have a chairperson and a  
13 treasurer, except that the candidate may serve as the chairperson and treasurer. Before a  
14 campaign committee accepts contributions, the name and address of the chairperson and  
15 treasurer shall be filed with the ~~Secretary of State~~ commission. When a candidate has been  
16 elected to public office, the registration of that candidate's campaign committee with the  
17 ~~Secretary of State~~ commission shall remain in effect so long as the candidate remains in  
18 office until and unless:

- 19 (1) ~~The~~ the registration is canceled by the campaign committee or the candidate; or  
20 (2) A a new campaign committee for that candidate is registered with the ~~Secretary of~~  
21 ~~State~~ commission.

22 The same person may serve as chairperson and treasurer. No contributions shall be  
23 accepted by or on behalf of the campaign committee at a time when there is a vacancy in  
24 the office of chairperson or treasurer of the campaign committee.

25 (c) Contributions of money received pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section shall  
26 be deposited in the separate campaign depository account opened and maintained by the  
27 candidate or the campaign committee for the purpose for which such campaign committee  
28 was organized. Such account may be an interest-bearing account; provided, however, that  
29 any interest earned on such account shall be deemed contributions and may only be used  
30 for the purposes allowed under this chapter. Those who elect the separate accounting  
31 option may also open, but are not required to open, a separate campaign depository account  
32 for each election for which contributions are accepted beyond their next upcoming election.

33 (d) Where separate contributions of less than \$101.00 are knowingly received from a  
34 common source, such contributions shall be aggregated for reporting purposes. For  
35 purposes of fulfilling such aggregation requirement, members of the same family, firm, or  
36 partnership or employees of the same person, as defined in paragraph ~~(14)~~ (17) of Code  
37 Section 21-5-3, shall be considered to be a common source; provided, however, that the

1 purchase of tickets for not more than \$25.00 each and for or attendance at a fundraising  
 2 event by members of the same family, firm, or partnership or employees of the same person  
 3 shall not be considered to be contributions from a common source except to the extent that  
 4 tickets are purchased as a block.

5 (e) The making and acceptance of anonymous contributions are prohibited. Any  
 6 anonymous contributions received by a candidate or campaign committee shall be  
 7 transmitted to the director of the Office of Treasury and Fiscal Services for deposit in the  
 8 state treasury, and the fact of such contribution and transmittal shall be reported to the  
 9 commission.

10 (f) A person acting on behalf of a public utility corporation regulated by the Public Service  
 11 Commission shall not make, directly or indirectly, any contribution to a political campaign.  
 12 This subsection shall not apply to motor carriers whose rates are not regulated by the Public  
 13 Service Commission. Any person who knowingly violates this subsection with respect to  
 14 a member of the Public Service Commission, a candidate for the Public Service  
 15 Commission, or the campaign committee of a candidate for the Public Service Commission  
 16 shall be guilty of a felony and shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than one nor  
 17 more than five years or by a fine not to exceed ~~\$5,000.00~~ \$10,000.00, or both; and any  
 18 person who knowingly violates this subsection with respect to any other public officer, a  
 19 candidate for such other public office, or the campaign committee of a candidate for such  
 20 other public office shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

21 (g) Neither a candidate who is not a public officer nor his or her campaign committee may  
 22 lawfully accept a campaign contribution until the candidate has filed with the ~~Secretary of~~  
 23 ~~State~~ commission or appropriate local filing officer a declaration of intention to accept  
 24 campaign contributions which shall include the name and address of the candidate and the  
 25 names and addresses of his or her campaign committee officers, if any.

26 (h) No candidate for public office as defined by OCGA 21-5-3 (20) (A), (B), (C) or (D),  
 27 any public officer as defined by OCGA 21-5-3 (20) (A), (B), (C) or (D), the campaign  
 28 committee for any candidate for public office as defined herein, the campaign committee  
 29 of any public officer as defined herein, nor any person as defined by OCGA 21-5-3 (17)  
 30 shall solicit or receive any contribution as defined by OCGA 20-5-3 (7) or gift as defined  
 31 by OCGA 20-5-70 (2.1) from any lobbyist as defined by OCGA 20-5-70 (6).”

### 32 **SECTION 10.**

33 Said chapter is further amended by striking Code Section 21-5-31, relating to contributions  
 34 or expenditures other than through candidate or committee and disclosure of extensions of  
 35 credit, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

36 "21-5-31.

1 ~~(a) Any person who accepts contributions for, makes contributions to, or makes~~  
 2 ~~expenditures on behalf of candidates is subject to the same disclosure requirements of this~~  
 3 ~~chapter as a candidate, except that contributions from individuals made directly to a~~  
 4 ~~candidate or his campaign committee do not require separate reporting, except that~~  
 5 ~~contributions from persons as defined in paragraph (14) of Code Section 21-5-3 which do~~  
 6 ~~not exceed \$500.00 in the aggregate or which are made to only one candidate, regardless~~  
 7 ~~of the amount, do not require separate reporting, and except that copies of campaign~~  
 8 ~~contribution disclosure reports do not have to be filed with local election superintendents~~  
 9 ~~as required of candidates for membership in the General Assembly pursuant to paragraph~~  
 10 ~~(1) of subsection (a) of Code Section 21-5-34.~~

11 ~~(b) When a contribution consists of the proceeds of a loan, advance, or other extension of~~  
 12 ~~credit, the campaign contribution disclosure report shall also contain the name of the~~  
 13 ~~lending institution or party making the advance or extension of credit and the names,~~  
 14 ~~mailing addresses, occupations, and places of employment of all persons having any~~  
 15 ~~liability for repayment of the loan, advance, or extension of credit; and, if any such persons~~  
 16 ~~shall have a fiduciary relationship to the lending institution or party making the advance~~  
 17 ~~or extension of credit, the report shall specify such relationship. Reserved."~~

#### 18 SECTION 10.1.

19 Said chapter is further amended by striking paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of Code Section  
 20 21-5-33, relating to disposition of campaign contributions, and inserting in lieu thereof the  
 21 following:

22 “(b)(1) All contributions received by a candidate or such candidate’s campaign  
 23 committee or a public officer holding elective office in excess of those necessary to  
 24 defray expenses pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section and as determined by such  
 25 candidate or such public officer may only be used as follows:

26 (A) As contributions to any charitable organization described in 26 U.S.C. 170(c) as  
 27 said federal statute exists on March 1, 1986, and which additionally shall include  
 28 educational, eleemosynary, and nonprofit organizations;

29 (B) Except as otherwise provided in subparagraph ~~(D)~~(E) of this paragraph, for  
 30 transferral without limitation to any national, state, or local committee of any political  
 31 party or to any candidate;

32 (C) For transferral without limitation to persons making such contributions, not to  
 33 exceed the total amount cumulatively contributed by each such transferee;

34 (D) For transferral without limitation to the state or a political subdivision of the state  
 35 to defray all or part of the cost of holding an election to fill the elective office which  
 36 such candidate sought or public officer holds or held;



1 ~~(D)~~(E) For use in future campaigns for only that elective office for which those  
2 contributions were received. With respect to contributions held on January 1, 1992, or  
3 received thereafter, in the event the candidate, campaign committee, or public officer  
4 holding elective office has not designated, prior to receiving contributions to which this  
5 Code section is applicable, the office for which campaign contributions are received  
6 thereby, those contributions shall be deemed to have been received for the elective  
7 office which the candidate held at the time the contributions were received or, if the  
8 candidate did not then hold elective office, those contributions shall be deemed to have  
9 been received for that elective office for which that person was a candidate most  
10 recently following the receipt of such contributions; or

11 ~~(E)~~(F) For repayment of any prior campaign obligations incurred as a candidate.”

### 12 SECTION 11.

13 Said chapter is further amended by striking Code Section 21-5-34, relating to disclosure  
14 reports, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

15 "21-5-34.

16 (a)(1)(A) The candidate or the chairperson or treasurer of each campaign committee  
17 organized to bring about the nomination or election of a candidate for any office except  
18 county and municipal offices or the General Assembly and the chairperson or treasurer  
19 of every campaign committee designed to bring about the recall of a public officer or  
20 to oppose the recall of a public officer or designed to bring about the approval or  
21 rejection by the voters of any proposed constitutional amendment or state-wide  
22 referendum shall sign and file with the ~~Secretary of State~~ commission the required  
23 campaign contribution disclosure reports. A candidate for membership in the General  
24 Assembly or the chairperson or treasurer of such candidate’s campaign committee shall  
25 file such candidate’s reports with the ~~Secretary of State~~ commission and a copy thereof  
26 with the election superintendent of the county of such candidate’s residence.

27 (B) The chairperson or treasurer of each independent committee as defined in Code  
28 Section 21-5-3 shall file the required disclosure reports with the ~~Secretary of State~~  
29 commission.

30 (2)(A) Any campaign committee which accepts contributions or makes expenditures  
31 designed to bring about the approval or rejection by the voters of any proposed question  
32 which is to appear on the ballot in any county or municipal election shall file a  
33 campaign contribution disclosure report as prescribed by this chapter; provided,  
34 however, that such report shall only be required if such campaign committee has  
35 received contributions which total more than \$500.00 or if such campaign committee  
36 has made expenditures which total more than \$500.00. All advertising pertaining to

1 referendums ~~must~~ shall identify the principal officer of such campaign committee by  
2 listing or stating the name and title of the principal officer.

3 (B) If a campaign committee is required to file a report under subparagraph (A) of this  
4 paragraph, such report shall be filed with the election superintendent of the county in  
5 the case of a county election or with the municipal clerk in the case of a municipal  
6 election. Any such report shall be filed 15 days prior to the date of the election; and a  
7 final report shall be filed prior to December 31 of the year in which the election is held.

8 (3) A candidate for county office or the chairperson or treasurer of such candidate's  
9 campaign committee shall sign and file the required campaign contribution disclosure  
10 reports with the election superintendent in the respective county of election.

11 (4) A candidate for municipal office or such candidate's campaign committee shall file  
12 the reports with the municipal clerk in the respective municipality of election or, if there  
13 is no clerk, with the chief executive officer of the municipality.

14 (b)(1) All reports shall list the following:

15 (A) ~~The~~ As to any contributions of \$101.00 or more, its amount and date of receipt,  
16 ~~along with the name; and mailing address, occupation, and employer of any person~~  
17 ~~making a contribution of \$101.00 or more, including~~ of the person making the  
18 contribution, and, if that person is an individual, that person's occupation and the name  
19 of his or her employer. Such contributions shall include, but shall not be limited to, the  
20 purchase of tickets for events such as dinners, luncheons, rallies, and similar  
21 fundraising events coordinated for the purpose of raising campaign contributions for  
22 the reporting candidate person;

23 (B) ~~The name and mailing address and occupation or place of employment of any~~  
24 ~~person to whom an expenditure of \$101.00 or more is made and the amount, date, and~~  
25 ~~general purpose of such expenditure;~~ As to any expenditure of \$101.00 or more, its  
26 amount and date of expenditure, the name and mailing address of the person receiving  
27 the expenditure, and, if that person is an individual, that person's occupation and the  
28 name of his or her employer and the general purpose of the expenditure;

29 (C) When a contribution consists of a loan, advance, or other extension of credit, the  
30 report shall also contain the name of the lending institution or party making the advance  
31 or extension of credit and the names, mailing addresses, occupations, and places of  
32 employment of all persons having any liability for repayment of the loan, advance, or  
33 extension of credit; and, if any such persons shall have a fiduciary relationship to the  
34 lending institution or party making the advance or extension of credit, the report shall  
35 specify such relationship;

36 (D) Total contributions received and total expenditures made as follows:

1 (i) Contributions and expenditures shall be reported for the applicable reporting  
2 cycle;

3 (ii) A reporting cycle shall commence on January 1 of the year in which an election  
4 is to be held for the public office to which a candidate seeks election and shall  
5 conclude:

6 (I) At the expiration of the term of office if such candidate is elected and does not  
7 seek reelection or election to some other office;

8 (II) On December 31 of the year in which such election was held if such candidate  
9 is unsuccessful; or

10 (III) If such candidate is successful and seeks reelection or seeks election to some  
11 other office the current reporting cycle shall end when the reporting cycle for  
12 reelection or for some other office begins;

13 (iii) The first report of a reporting cycle shall list the net balance on hand brought  
14 forward from the previous reporting cycle, if any, and the total contributions received  
15 during the period covered by the report;

16 (iv) Subsequent reports shall list the total contributions received during the period  
17 covered by the report and the cumulative total of contributions received during the  
18 reporting cycle;

19 (v) The first report of a reporting cycle shall list the total expenditures made during  
20 the period covered by the report;

21 (vi) Subsequent reports shall list the total expenditures made during the period  
22 covered by the report, the cumulative total of expenditures made during the reporting  
23 cycle, and net balance on hand; and

24 (vii) If a public officer seeks reelection to the same public office, the net balance on  
25 hand at the end of the current reporting cycle shall be carried forward to the first  
26 report of the applicable new reporting cycle; and

27 (E) The corporate, labor union, or other affiliation of any political action committee or  
28 independent committee making a contribution of \$101.00 or more.

29 (2) Each report shall be in such form as will allow for the separate identification of a  
30 contribution or contributions which are less than \$101.00 but which become reportable  
31 due to the receipt of an additional contribution or contributions which when combined  
32 with such previously received contribution or contributions cumulatively equal or exceed  
33 \$101.00.

34 (c) Candidates or campaign committees which accept contributions, make expenditures  
35 designed to bring about the nomination or election of a candidate, or have filed a  
36 declaration of intention to accept campaign contributions pursuant to subsection (g) of

1 Code Section 21-5-30 shall file campaign contribution disclosure reports in compliance  
2 with the following schedule:

3 (1) In each nonelection year on June 30 and December 31;

4 (2) In each year in which the candidate qualifies to run for public office:

5 (A) On March 31, June 30, September 30, October 25, and December 31;

6 (B) Six days before any run-off primary or election in which the candidate is listed on  
7 the ballot; and

8 (C) During the period of time between the last report due prior to the date of any  
9 ~~state-wide primary or state-wide~~ election for which the candidate is qualified and the  
10 date of such primary or election, all contributions of \$1,000.00 or more ~~must~~ shall be  
11 reported within 48 hours of receipt to the location where the original disclosure report  
12 for such candidate or committee was filed and also reported on the next succeeding  
13 regularly scheduled campaign contribution disclosure report;

14 (3) If the candidate is candidate in a special primary or special primary runoff, 15 days  
15 prior to the special primary and six days prior to the special primary runoff; and

16 (4) If the candidate is candidate in a special election or special election runoff, 15 days  
17 prior to the special election and six days prior to the special election runoff.

18 All persons or entities required to file reports shall have a five-day grace period in filing  
19 the required reports, except that the grace period shall be two days for required reports  
20 prior to run-off primaries or run-off elections, and no grace period shall apply to  
21 contributions required to be reported within 48 hours. The mailing of such reports by  
22 United States mail with adequate postage affixed, within the required filing time as  
23 determined by the official United States postage date cancellation, shall be prima-facie  
24 evidence of filing but reports required to be filed within 48 hours of a contribution ~~must~~  
25 shall also be reported by facsimile, electronic transmission, or otherwise within those 48  
26 hours to the location where the original disclosure report for such candidate or committee  
27 was filed. A report or statement required to be filed by this Code section other than a report  
28 of contributions required to be reported within 48 hours shall be verified by the oath or  
29 affirmation of the person filing such report or statement taken before an officer authorized  
30 to administer oaths. Each report required in the calendar year of the election shall contain  
31 cumulative totals of all contributions which have been received and all expenditures which  
32 have been made in support of the campaign in question and which are required, or  
33 previously have been required, to be reported.

34 (d) In the event any candidate covered by this chapter has no opposition in either a primary  
35 or a general election and receives no contribution of \$101.00 or more, such candidate shall  
36 only be required to make the initial and final report as required under this chapter.

1 (e) Any person who makes contributions to, accepts contributions for, or makes  
 2 expenditures on behalf of candidates, and any independent committee, shall file a  
 3 registration with the ~~Secretary of State~~ commission in the same manner as is required of  
 4 campaign committees prior to accepting or making contributions or expenditures. Such  
 5 persons, other than independent committees, shall also file campaign contribution  
 6 disclosure reports in the same places and at the same times as required of the candidates  
 7 they are supporting, but such persons are not required to file copies of campaign  
 8 contribution disclosure reports with local election superintendents as is required of  
 9 candidates for membership in the General Assembly. The following persons shall be  
 10 exempt from the foregoing registration and reporting requirements:

11 (1) Individuals making aggregate contributions of \$25,000.00 or less directly to  
 12 candidates or the candidates' campaign committees in one calendar year; ~~and~~

13 (2) Persons other than individuals making aggregate contributions and expenditures to  
 14 or on behalf of candidates of \$5,000.00 or less in one calendar year; and

15 (3) Contributors who make contributions to only one candidate during one calendar year,  
 16 regardless of the amount contributed.

17 (f)(1) Any independent committee which accepts contributions or makes expenditures  
 18 for the purpose of affecting the outcome of an election or advocates the election or defeat  
 19 of any candidate shall file disclosure reports with the ~~Secretary of State~~ commission as  
 20 follows:

21 (A) ~~On~~ On the first day of each of the two calendar months preceding any such  
 22 election;

23 (B) ~~Two~~ Two weeks prior to the date of such election; and

24 (C) ~~Within~~ Within the two-week period prior to the date of such election the  
 25 independent committee shall report within 48 hours any contributions or expenditure  
 26 of more than \$1,000.00.

27 The independent committee shall file a final report prior to December 31 of the year in  
 28 which the election is held and shall file supplemental reports on June 30 and December  
 29 31 of each year that such independent committee continues to accept contributions or  
 30 make expenditures.

31 (2) Reports filed by independent committees shall list the following:

32 (A) The amount and date of receipt, along with the name, mailing address, occupation,  
 33 and employer of any person making a contribution of \$101.00 or more;

34 (B) The name, mailing address, occupation, and employer of any person to whom an  
 35 expenditure or provision of goods or services of the value of \$101.00 or more is made  
 36 and the amount, date, and general purpose thereof, including the name of the candidate

1 or candidates, if any, on behalf of whom, or in support of or in opposition to whom, the  
2 expenditure or provision was made;

3 (C) Total expenditures made as follows:

4 (i) Expenditures shall be reported for the applicable reporting year;

5 (ii) The first report of a reporting year shall list the total expenditures made during  
6 the period covered by the report; and

7 (iii) Subsequent reports shall list the total expenditures made during the period  
8 covered by the report, the cumulative total of expenditures made during the reporting  
9 year, and net balance on hand; and

10 (D) The corporate, labor union, or other affiliation of any political action committee,  
11 candidate, campaign committee, or independent committee making a contribution of  
12 the value of \$101.00 or more.

13 (3) Whenever any independent committee makes an expenditure for the purpose of  
14 financing any communication intended to affect the outcome of an election, such  
15 communication shall clearly state that it has been financed by such independent  
16 committee.

17 (g) Any campaign committee which accepts contributions or makes expenditures designed  
18 to bring about the recall of a public officer or to oppose the recall of a public officer shall  
19 file campaign contribution disclosure reports with the ~~Secretary of State~~ commission as  
20 follows:

21 (1) An initial report shall be filed within 15 days after the date when the official recall  
22 petition forms were issued to the sponsors;

23 (2) A second report shall be filed 45 days after the filing of the initial report;

24 (3) A third report shall be filed within 20 days after the election superintendent certifies  
25 legal sufficiency or insufficiency of a recall petition;

26 (4) A final report shall be filed prior to December 31 of the year in which the recall  
27 election is held or, in any case where such recall election is not held, a final report shall  
28 be filed prior to December 31 of any year in which such campaign committee accepts  
29 such contributions or makes such expenditures; and

30 (5) In the case of state officials or county officials, a copy of each of the reports shall  
31 also be filed with the election superintendent in the county of residence of the official  
32 sought to be recalled. In the case of municipal officials, a copy of the reports shall also  
33 be filed with the municipal clerk in the municipality of residence of the official sought  
34 to be recalled or, if there is no clerk, with the chief executive officer of the municipality.

35 Each filing officer shall forward a copy of the reporting forms required by this Code  
36 section to each candidate or public officer holding elective office required to file such  
37 report within a reasonable time prior to each filing.

1 (h) Any campaign committee which accepts contributions or makes expenditures designed  
2 to bring about the approval or rejection by the voters of a proposed constitutional  
3 amendment or a state-wide referendum shall file a campaign contribution disclosure report  
4 with the ~~Secretary of State~~ commission 75, 45, and 15 days prior to the date of the election  
5 and shall file a final report prior to December 31 of the year in which the election is held.

6 (i) In any county in which the county board of elections does not maintain an office open  
7 to the public during normal business hours for five days a week, the reports required by this  
8 Code section shall be filed in the office of the judge of the probate court of that county.

9 (j)(1) Any person elected to a public office who is required to file campaign contribution  
10 disclosure reports pursuant to this article shall, upon leaving public office with excess  
11 contributions, be required to file supplemental campaign contribution disclosure reports  
12 on June 30 and December 31 of each year until such contributions are expended in a  
13 campaign for elective office or used as provided in subsection (b) of Code Section  
14 21-5-33.

15 (2) Any person who is an unsuccessful candidate in an election and who is required to  
16 file campaign contribution disclosure reports pursuant to this article shall for the  
17 remainder of the reporting cycle file such reports at the same times as a successful  
18 candidate and thereafter, upon having excess contributions from such campaign, be  
19 required to file a supplemental campaign contribution disclosure report no later than  
20 December 31 of each year until such contributions are expended in a campaign for  
21 elective office or used as provided in subsection (b) of Code Section 21-5-33. Any  
22 unsuccessful candidate in an election who is required to file campaign contribution  
23 disclosure reports pursuant to this article and who receives contributions following such  
24 election to retire debts incurred in such campaign for elective office shall be required to  
25 file a supplemental campaign contribution disclosure report no later than December 31  
26 of each year until such unpaid expenditures from such campaign are satisfied.

27 (k) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter to the contrary, soil and water  
28 conservation district supervisors elected pursuant to Article 2 of Chapter 6 of Title 2, the  
29 'Soil and Water Conservation Districts Law,' shall not be required to file campaign  
30 contribution disclosure reports under this Code section.

31 (l) In addition to other penalties provided under this chapter, an additional filing fee of  
32 \$25.00 shall be imposed for each report that is filed late. In addition, a filing fee of \$50.00  
33 shall be imposed on the fifteenth day after the due date if the report has still not been filed;  
34 provided, however, a 15 day extension period shall be granted on the final report.

35 (m) It shall be the duty of the commission or any other officer or body which receives for  
36 filing any disclosure report or statement or other document required to be filed under this  
37 chapter to maintain with the filed document a copy of the postal markings or statutory

1 overnight delivery service markings of any envelope, package, or wrapping in which the  
 2 document was delivered for filing if mailed or sent after the date such filing was due."

### 3 SECTION 12.

4 Said chapter is further amended by striking Code Section 21-5-34.1, relating to filing  
 5 campaign contribution disclosure reports electronically, and inserting in lieu thereof the  
 6 following:

7 "21-5-34.1.

8 (a) ~~Beginning February 1, 2001, candidates~~ Candidates seeking election to constitutional  
 9 offices, the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, and the Public Service Commission shall  
 10 use electronic means to file their campaign contribution disclosure reports with the  
 11 ~~Secretary of State~~ commission upon having raised or spent a minimum of \$20,000.00 in  
 12 an election cycle. Under that threshold, electronic filing is permitted and encouraged but  
 13 not required.

14 (b) ~~Beginning January 1, 2003, candidates~~ Candidates seeking election to the General  
 15 Assembly, superior courts, and the office of district attorney shall use electronic means to  
 16 file their campaign contribution disclosure reports with the ~~Secretary of State~~ commission,  
 17 as specified in Code Section 21-5-34, upon having raised or spent a minimum of  
 18 \$10,000.00 in an election cycle, but contributions and expenditures received or made prior  
 19 to reaching such threshold need not be electronically filed if previously reported, except  
 20 as cumulative totals. Under that threshold, electronic filing is permitted and encouraged  
 21 but not required.

22 (c) ~~Beginning January 1, 2003, candidates~~ Candidates seeking election to county or  
 23 municipal offices shall use electronic means to file their campaign contribution disclosure  
 24 reports with the election superintendent of their county or the municipal clerk or chief  
 25 executive officer of their municipality, as specified in Code Section 21-5-34, upon having  
 26 raised or spent a minimum of \$10,000.00 in an election cycle, but contributions and  
 27 expenditures received or made prior to reaching such threshold need not be electronically  
 28 filed if previously reported, except as cumulative totals. Under that threshold, electronic  
 29 filing is permitted and encouraged but not required.

30 (d) ~~Beginning January 1, 2003, political~~ Political action committees, independent  
 31 committees, and any persons otherwise required by this article to file campaign  
 32 contribution disclosure reports shall use electronic means to file such reports with the  
 33 ~~Secretary of State~~ commission upon having raised or spent \$5,000.00 in a calendar year.  
 34 Under that threshold, electronic filing is permitted and encouraged but not required.



1 (e) When campaign contribution disclosure reports are filed electronically as provided in  
 2 subsections (a) through (d) of this Code section, the original report shall be filed at the  
 3 same location.

4 (f) No funds raised or spent prior to the implementation date of electronic filing shall be  
 5 counted toward the appropriate threshold.

6 (g) The commission is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations to implement this  
 7 Code section."

### 8 **SECTION 13.**

9 Said chapter is further amended by striking Code Section 21-5-35, relating to acceptance of  
 10 contributions during legislative sessions, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

11 "21-5-35.

12 (a) No member of the General Assembly or that member's campaign committee or public  
 13 officer elected state wide or campaign committee of such public officer shall accept or  
 14 solicit a contribution or a pledge of a contribution during a legislative session.

15 (b) Subsection (a) of this Code section shall not apply to:

16 (1) The receipt of a contribution which is returned with reasonable promptness to the  
 17 donor or the donor's agent;

18 (2) The receipt and acceptance during a legislative session of a contribution consisting  
 19 of proceeds from a dinner, luncheon, rally, or similar fundraising event held prior to the  
 20 legislative session; or

21 (3) A judicial officer elected state wide or campaign committee of such judicial officer."

### 22 **SECTION 14.**

23 Said chapter is further amended by striking paragraph (6.2) of Code Section 21-5-40, relating  
 24 to definitions applicable to campaign contributions, and inserting in lieu thereof the  
 25 following:

26 "(6.2) 'Public office' means the office of each elected public officer as specified in  
 27 paragraph ~~(15)~~(20) of Code Section 21-5-3."

### 28 **SECTION 15.**

29 Said chapter is further amended by striking Code Section 21-5-50, relating to filing by public  
 30 officers and filings by candidates for public office, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

31 "21-5-50.

32 (a)(1) Except as modified in subsection (c) of this Code section with respect to  
 33 candidates for state-wide elected public office, each public officer, as defined in  
 34 subparagraphs (A) through (E) of paragraph ~~(15)~~ (20) of Code Section 21-5-3, shall file

1 with the ~~Secretary of State~~ commission not before the first day of January nor later than  
2 July 1 of each year in which such public officer holds office other than the year in which  
3 an election is held for such public office, a financial disclosure statement for the  
4 preceding calendar year; and each person who qualifies as a candidate for election as a  
5 public officer, as defined in subparagraphs (A) through (E) of paragraph ~~(15)~~ (20) of  
6 Code Section 21-5-3, shall file with the ~~Secretary of State~~ commission, no later than the  
7 fifteenth day following the date of qualifying as a candidate, a financial disclosure  
8 statement for the preceding calendar year.

9 (2) Each public officer, as defined in subparagraph (F) of paragraph ~~(15)~~ (20) of Code  
10 Section 21-5-3, shall file with the election superintendent of the county of election of  
11 such public officer, not before the first day of January nor later than July 1 of each year  
12 in which such public officer holds office other than the year in which an election is held  
13 for such public office, a financial disclosure statement for the preceding calendar year.  
14 Each person who qualifies as a candidate for election as a public officer, as defined in  
15 subparagraph (F) of paragraph ~~(15)~~ (20) of Code Section 21-5-3, shall file with the  
16 election superintendent of the county of election, no later than the fifteenth day following  
17 the date of qualifying as a candidate, a financial disclosure statement for the preceding  
18 calendar year.

19 (3) Each public officer, as defined in subparagraph (G) of paragraph ~~(15)~~ (20) of Code  
20 Section 21-5-3, shall file with the municipal clerk of the municipality of election or, if  
21 there is no clerk, with the chief executive officer of such municipality, not before the first  
22 day of January nor later than July 1 of each year in which such public officer holds office  
23 other than the year in which an election is held for such public office, a financial  
24 disclosure statement for the preceding calendar year. Each person who qualifies as a  
25 candidate for election as a public officer, as defined in subparagraph (G) of paragraph  
26 ~~(15)~~ (20) of Code Section 21-5-3, shall file with the municipal clerk of the municipality  
27 of election or, if there is no clerk, with the chief executive officer of such municipality,  
28 no later than the fifteenth day following the date of qualifying as a candidate, a financial  
29 disclosure statement for the preceding calendar year.

30 (4) The filing officer shall review each financial disclosure statement to determine that  
31 such statement is in compliance with the requirements of this chapter.

32 (5) A public officer shall not, however, be required to file such a financial disclosure  
33 statement for the preceding calendar year in a year in which there occurs qualifying for  
34 election to succeed such public officer, if such public officer does not qualify for  
35 nomination for election to succeed himself or herself or for election to any other public  
36 office subject to this chapter. For purposes of this subsection, a public officer shall not

1 be deemed to hold office in a year in which the public officer holds office for less than  
2 15 days.

3 (b) A financial disclosure statement shall be in the form specified by the commission and  
4 shall identify:

5 (1) Each monetary fee or honorarium ~~of \$101.00 or less~~ which is accepted by a public  
6 officer ~~from speaking engagements, participation in seminars, discussion panels, or other~~  
7 ~~activities which directly relate to the official duties of the public officer or the office of~~  
8 ~~the public officer, with a statement identifying the fee or honorarium accepted and the~~  
9 ~~person from whom it was accepted~~ as permitted by subsection (b) of Code Section  
10 21-5-75;

11 (2) All fiduciary positions held by the candidate for public office or the public officer,  
12 with a statement of the title of each such position, the name and address of the business  
13 entity, and the principal activity of the business entity;

14 (3) The name, address, and principal activity of any business entity and the office held  
15 by and the duties of the candidate for public office or public officer within such business  
16 entity as of December 31 of the covered year in which such candidate or officer has a  
17 direct ownership interest which interest:

18 (A) Is more than ~~10~~ 5 percent of the total interests in such business; or

19 (B) Has a net fair market value of more than \$20,000.00;

20 (4) Each tract of real property in which the candidate for public office or public officer  
21 has a direct ownership interest or purchase option as of December 31 of the covered year  
22 when that interest has a ~~net~~ fair market value in excess of \$20,000.00. As used in this  
23 paragraph, the term '~~net~~ fair market' value means the appraised value of the property for  
24 ad valorem tax purposes ~~less any indebtedness thereon~~. The disclosure shall contain the  
25 county and state and general ~~location therein where the property is located~~ description of  
26 the property;

27 (5) The filer's occupation, employer, and the principal activity and address of such  
28 employer;

29 (6) If he or she has actual knowledge of such ownership interest or knowledge of facts  
30 which would put a reasonable and prudent person on notice of such ownership interest,  
31 the filer shall name any business or subsidiary thereof in Georgia in which the filer's  
32 spouse or dependent children, jointly or severally, own a direct ownership interest which  
33 interest;

34 (A) Is more than 5 percent of the total interests in such business; or

35 (B) Has a net fair market value of more than \$20,000.00

36 or in which the filer's spouse or any dependent child serves as an officer, director,  
37 equitable partner, or trustee;

1 (7) If the filer has engaged in a business in a fiduciary position during the last reporting  
 2 year which provides legal, investment, accounting, medical or health related, real estate,  
 3 banking, insurance, educational, farming, engineering, architectural, construction, or  
 4 other professional services or consultations, then the filing party shall report each  
 5 category from which the gross income received from all combined clients in such  
 6 category exceeds \$10,000.00 and the amount of the gross income. Such categories shall  
 7 be established by rule of the commission and may include a stock investment portfolio,  
 8 electric utilities, gas utilities, telephone utilities, water utilities, cable television  
 9 companies, intrastate transportation companies, pipeline companies, oil or gas exploration  
 10 companies or both, oil and gas retail companies, banks, savings and loan associations,  
 11 loan or finance companies or both, manufacturing firms, mining companies, life  
 12 insurance companies, casualty insurance companies, other insurance companies, retail  
 13 companies, beer, wine, or liquor companies or distributors or any combination thereof,  
 14 trade associations, professional associations, governmental associations, associations of  
 15 public employees or public officials, and counties;

16 ~~(5)~~(8) All annual payments in excess of \$20,000.00 received by the public officer or any  
 17 business entity identified in paragraph (3) of this subsection from the state, any agency,  
 18 department, commission, or authority created by the state, and authorized and exempted  
 19 from disclosure under Code Section 45-10-25, and the agency, department, commission,  
 20 or authority making the payments, and the general nature of the consideration rendered  
 21 for the source of the payments; and

22 ~~(6)~~(9) No form prescribed by the commission shall require more information or specify  
 23 more than provided in the several paragraphs of this Code section with respect to what  
 24 is required to be disclosed.

25 (c)(1) Each person who qualifies with a political party as a candidate for party  
 26 nomination to a public office elected state wide (including an incumbent public officer  
 27 elected state wide qualifying to succeed himself or herself) shall file with the ~~Secretary~~  
 28 ~~of State~~ commission, not later than seven days after so qualifying, a financial disclosure  
 29 statement. Each person who qualifies as a candidate for election to a public office elected  
 30 state wide through a nomination petition or convention shall likewise file a financial  
 31 disclosure statement not later than seven days after filing his or her notice of candidacy.  
 32 Such financial disclosure statement shall comply with the requirements of subsections (a)  
 33 and (b) of this Code section and shall in addition identify, for the preceding five calendar  
 34 years:

35 (A) Each transaction or transactions which aggregate \$9,000.00 or more in a calendar  
 36 year in which the candidate (whether for himself or herself or on behalf of any  
 37 business) or any business in which such candidate or any member of his or her family

1 has a substantial interest or is an officer of such business has transacted business with  
 2 the government of the State of Georgia, the government of any political subdivision of  
 3 the State of Georgia, or any agency of any such government; and

4 (B) Each transaction or transactions which aggregate \$9,000.00 or more in a calendar  
 5 year in which the candidate or any business in which such candidate or any member of  
 6 his or her family has a substantial interest or is an officer of such business received any  
 7 income of any nature from any person who was at the time of such receipt of income  
 8 represented by a lobbyist registered with the commission pursuant to Article 4 of this  
 9 chapter.

10 (2) The financial disclosure statement required by paragraph (1) of this subsection shall  
 11 include an itemized list of the transactions required to be reported, including the date of,  
 12 dollar amount of, and parties to each such transaction. However, with respect to any  
 13 transactions of a privileged nature only the total amount of such transactions shall be  
 14 required to be reported, and names, dates, amounts of individual transactions, and other  
 15 identifying data may be omitted; and for this purpose 'transactions of a privileged nature'  
 16 shall include transactions between attorney and client, transactions between psychiatrist  
 17 and patient, transactions between physician and patient, and any other transactions which  
 18 are by law of a similar privileged and confidential nature.

19 (3) The financial disclosure statement required by paragraph (1) of this subsection shall  
 20 be accompanied by a financial statement of the candidate's financial affairs for the  
 21 calendar year prior to the year in which the election is held and the first quarter of the  
 22 calendar year in which the election is held.

23 (4)~~(A)~~ As used in this subsection, the term:

24 ~~(i)~~(A) 'Agency' means any agency, authority, department, board, bureau, commission,  
 25 committee, office, or instrumentality of the State of Georgia or any political subdivision  
 26 of the State of Georgia.

27 ~~(ii)~~(B) 'Financial statement' means a statement of a candidate's financial affairs in a  
 28 form substantially equivalent to the short form financial statement required for bank  
 29 directors under the rules of the Department of Banking and Finance.

30 ~~(B) As used in this subsection, the term:~~

31 ~~(i)~~(C) 'Member of the family' includes the candidate's spouse and dependent children;  
 32 and.

33 ~~(ii)~~(D) 'Person' and 'transact business' shall have the meanings specified in Code  
 34 Section 45-10-20.

35 ~~(iii)~~(E) 'Substantial interest' means the direct or indirect ownership of 10 percent or  
 36 more of the assets or stock of any business.

1 (5) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this subsection, if, due to a special election  
 2 or otherwise, a person does not qualify as a candidate for nomination or election to public  
 3 office until after the filing date otherwise applicable, such person shall make the filings  
 4 required by this subsection within seven days after so qualifying.

5 (d) Beginning January 10, 2005, all state-wide elected officials and members of the  
 6 General Assembly shall file financial disclosure statements electronically. Prior to such  
 7 date electronic filing of financial disclosure statements by such persons is permitted and  
 8 encouraged but not required."

#### 9 SECTION 16.

10 Said chapter is further amended by striking Code Section 21-5-52, relating to filing by mail,  
 11 and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

12 "21-5-52.

13 ~~Depositing of a properly addressed financial disclosure statement in the United States mails~~  
 14 ~~with adequate postage affixed shall constitute filing on the date of mailing.~~

15 (a) The mailing of financial disclosure statements by United States mail, with adequate  
 16 postage affixed, within the required filing time as determined by the official United States  
 17 postage date cancellation, shall be prima-facie evidence of filing.

18 (b) It shall be the duty of the commission or any other officer or body which receives for  
 19 filing any disclosure report or statement or other document required to be filed under this  
 20 chapter to maintain with the filed document a copy of the postal markings or statutory  
 21 overnight delivery service markings of any envelope, package, or wrapping in which the  
 22 document was delivered for filing if mailed or sent after the date such filing was due."

#### 23 SECTION 17.

24 Said chapter is further amended by striking Code Section 21-5-70, relating to definitions, and  
 25 inserting in lieu thereof the following:

26 "21-5-70.

27 As used in this article, the term:

28 (1) 'Expenditure':

29 (A) Means a purchase, payment, distribution, loan, advance, deposit, or conveyance  
 30 of money or anything of value made for the purpose of influencing the actions of any  
 31 public officer or public employee;

32 (B) Includes any other form of payment when such can be reasonably construed as  
 33 designed to encourage or influence a public officer;

1 (C) Includes any gratuitous transfer, payment, subscription, advance, or deposit of  
 2 money, services, or anything of value, unless consideration of equal or greater value is  
 3 received;

4 (D) Notwithstanding division (x) of subparagraph (E) of this paragraph, includes food  
 5 or beverage consumed at a single meal or event by a public officer or public employee  
 6 or a member of the immediate family of such public officer or public employee; and

7 (E) The term shall not include:

8 (i) The value of personal services performed by persons who serve voluntarily  
 9 without compensation from any source;

10 (ii) A gift received from a member of the public officer's immediate family;

11 (iii) Legal compensation or expense reimbursement provided public employees and  
 12 public officers in the performance of their duties;

13 (iv) Promotional items generally distributed to the general public or to public officers  
 14 and food and beverages produced in Georgia;

15 (v) An award, plaque, certificate, memento, or similar item given in recognition of  
 16 the recipient's civic, charitable, political, professional, or public service;

17 (vi) Legitimate salary, benefits, fees, commissions, or expenses associated with a  
 18 recipient's nonpublic business, employment, trade, or profession;

19 (vii) Food, beverages, and registration at group events to which all members of an  
 20 agency, as defined in paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of Code Section 21-5-30.2, are  
 21 invited. An agency shall include the Georgia House of Representatives, the Georgia  
 22 Senate, committees and subcommittees of such bodies, and the governing body of  
 23 each political subdivision of this state;

24 (viii) Campaign contributions or expenditures reported as required by Article 2 of  
 25 this chapter;

26 (ix) A commercially reasonable loan made in the ordinary course of business; or

27 (x) Food, beverage, or expenses afforded public officers, members of their immediate  
 28 families, or others that are associated with normal and customary business or social  
 29 functions or activities.

30 (2) 'Filed' means the delivery to the State Ethics Commission, as specified in this article,  
 31 of a document that satisfies the requirements of this article. A document is considered  
 32 delivered when it is placed in the United States mail within the required filing time,  
 33 properly addressed to the State Ethics Commission, as specified in this article, with  
 34 adequate postage affixed.

35 (2.1) 'Gift' means anything of value including, but not limited to, food, beverages,  
 36 lodging, travel, transportation, personal services, gratuities, honoraria, subscriptions,  
 37 memberships, trips, loans, extensions of credit, forgiveness of debts, or advances or

1 deposits of money. Gift shall not include a bona fide loan made by a state or federally  
 2 chartered financial institution or a depository institution whose deposits are insured by  
 3 the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation if such loan is made in the normal course of  
 4 business with the expectation on the part of all parties that such loan shall be repaid and  
 5 such loan is based on the credit worthiness of the borrower and the borrower is personally  
 6 liable for the repayment of the loan. Gift shall not include those items identified in  
 7 division (1)(E)(vii) of this Code section. For purposes of this paragraph, reimbursement  
 8 or payment of actual and reasonable expenses for food, beverages, travel, transportation,  
 9 lodging, and registration for a meeting which is provided to a public officer or employee  
 10 to permit such public officer's or employees's participation in a panel or speaking  
 11 engagement at the meeting shall not be considered a gift.

12 (3) 'Identifiable group of public officers' means a description that is specifically  
 13 determinable by available public records.

14 (4) 'Immediate family' means a spouse or child.

15 (5) 'Lobbying' means the activity of a lobbyist while acting in that capacity.

16 (6) 'Lobbyist' means:

17 (A) Any natural person who, for compensation, either individually or as an employee  
 18 of another person, undertakes to promote or oppose the passage of any legislation by  
 19 the General Assembly, or any committee thereof, or the approval or veto of legislation  
 20 by the Governor;

21 (B) Any natural person who makes a total expenditure of more than \$250.00 in a  
 22 calendar year, not including the person's own travel, food, lodging expenses, or  
 23 informational material to promote or oppose the passage of any legislation by the  
 24 General Assembly, or any committee thereof, or the approval or veto of legislation by  
 25 the Governor;

26 (C) Any natural person who as an employee of the executive branch or judicial branch  
 27 of state government engages in any activity covered under subparagraph (A) of this  
 28 paragraph;

29 (D) Any natural person who, for compensation, either individually or as an employee  
 30 of another person, undertakes to promote or oppose the passage of any ordinance or  
 31 resolution by a public officer specified under subparagraph (F) or (G) of paragraph ~~(15)~~  
 32 (20) of Code Section 21-5-3, or any committee of such public officers, or the approval  
 33 or veto of any such ordinance or resolution;

34 (E) Any natural person who makes a total expenditure of more than \$250.00 in a  
 35 calendar year, not including the person's own travel, food, lodging expenses, or  
 36 informational material to promote or oppose the passage of any ordinance or resolution  
 37 by a public officer specified under subparagraph (F) or (G) of paragraph ~~(15)~~ (20) of



1 Code Section 21-5-3, or any committee of such public officers, or the approval or veto  
2 of any such ordinance or resolution; or

3 (F) Any natural person who as an employee of the executive branch or judicial branch  
4 of local government engages in any activity covered under subparagraph (D) of this  
5 paragraph;

6 (G) Any natural person who, for compensation, either individually or as an employee  
7 of another person undertakes to influence a public officer or state agency in the  
8 selection of a vendor to supply any goods or services to any state agency but does not  
9 include a person solely on the basis that such person participates in preparing a written  
10 bid, written proposal, or other document relating to a potential sale to a state agency;

11 or

12 (H) Any natural person who, for compensation, either individually or as an employee  
13 of another person undertakes to promote or oppose the promulgation of administrative  
14 rules or regulations by any state agency.

15 (7) 'Public officer' means those public officers specified under subparagraphs (A)  
16 through (G) of paragraph (15) (20) of Code Section 21-5-3, as amended, except as  
17 otherwise provided in this article and also includes any public officer or employee who  
18 has any discretionary authority over, or is a member of a public body which has any  
19 discretionary authority over, the selection of a vendor to supply any goods or services to  
20 any state agency.

21 (8) 'State agency' means any branch of state government, agency, authority, department,  
22 board, bureau, commission, council, corporation, entity, or instrumentality of the state but  
23 does not include a local political subdivision, such as a county, city, or local school  
24 district or an instrumentality of such a local political subdivision.

25 (9) 'Vendor' means any person who sells to or contracts with any state agency for the  
26 provision of any goods or services."

## 27 SECTION 18.

28 Said chapter is further amended by striking Code Section 21-5-71, relating to lobbyist  
29 registration requirements, including the application, supplemental registration, expiration,  
30 docket, fees, identification cards, public rosters, and exemptions, and inserting in lieu thereof  
31 the following:

32 "21-5-71.

33 (a) No person shall engage in lobbying as defined by this article unless such person is  
34 registered with the State Ethics Commission as a lobbyist. The administration of this article  
35 is vested in the State Ethics Commission. ~~The State Ethics Commission shall be the~~

1 ~~successor to the Secretary of State with respect to such officer's former regulation of~~  
 2 ~~registered agents.~~

3 (b) Each lobbyist shall file an application for registration with the commission. The  
 4 application shall be verified by the applicant and shall contain:

5 (1) The applicant's name, address, and telephone number;

6 (2) The name, address, and telephone number of the person or agency that employs,  
 7 appoints, or authorizes the applicant to lobby on its behalf;

8 (3) A statement of the general business or purpose of each person, firm, corporation,  
 9 association, or agency the applicant represents;

10 (4) If the applicant represents a membership group other than an agency or corporation,  
 11 the general purpose and approximate number of members of the organization; ~~and~~

12 (5) A statement signed by the person or agency employing, appointing, or authorizing  
 13 the applicant to lobby on its behalf; and

14 (6) If the applicant is a lobbyist within the meaning of subparagraph (G) or (H) of  
 15 paragraph (6) of Code Section 21-5-70, the name of the state agency or agencies before  
 16 which the applicant engages in lobbying.

17 (c) The lobbyist shall, within seven days of any substantial or material change or addition,  
 18 file a supplemental registration indicating such substantial or material change or addition  
 19 to the registration prior to its expiration. Previously filed information may be incorporated  
 20 by reference. Substantial or material changes or additions shall include, but are not limited  
 21 to, the pertinent information concerning changes or additions to client and employment  
 22 information required by paragraphs (2), (3), ~~and (4)~~, and (6) of subsection (b) of this Code  
 23 section.

24 (d) Each registration under this Code section shall expire on December 31 of each year.  
 25 The commission may establish renewal procedures for those applicants desiring continuous  
 26 registrations. Previously filed information may be incorporated by reference.

27 (e) The commission shall provide a suitable public docket for registration under this Code  
 28 section with appropriate indices and shall enter promptly therein the names of the lobbyists  
 29 and the organizations they represent.

30 (f)(1) Each person registering under this Code section shall pay the registration fees set  
 31 forth in paragraph (2) of this subsection; provided, however, that a person who represents  
 32 any state, county, municipal, or public agency, department, commission, or authority  
 33 shall be exempted from payment of such registration fees and a person employed by an  
 34 organization exempt from federal income taxation under Section 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4)  
 35 of the Internal Revenue Code, as that code is defined in Code Section 48-1-2, shall be  
 36 exempted from payment of such registration fees except for payment of an initial  
 37 registration fee of \$25.00.

- 1 (2) The commission shall collect the following fees:
- 2 (A) Annual lobbyist registration filed pursuant to this Code section . . . . . \$ 200.00
- 3 (B) Lobbyist supplemental registration filed pursuant to this Code section 10.00
- 4 (C) Each lobbyist identification card issued pursuant to this Code section 5.00
- 5 (D) In addition to other penalties provided under this chapter, a filing fee of
- 6 \$50.00 shall be imposed for each report that is filed late. In addition, a filing
- 7 fee of \$25.00 shall be imposed on the fifteenth day after the due date if the
- 8 report has still not been filed.
- 9 (g) As soon as practicable after registering any such person, the commission shall issue to
- 10 such person an identification card which shall have printed thereon the name of the lobbyist
- 11 and the person or agency such lobbyist represents, provided that, when any such person
- 12 represents more than one entity, such identification card shall have printed thereon the
- 13 name of the registered person and the word 'LOBBYIST.' Each lobbyist while engaged in
- 14 lobbying at the capitol or in a government facility shall display said identification in a
- 15 readily visible manner.
- 16 (h) The commission shall regularly publish public rosters of lobbyists along with the
- 17 respective persons, firms, corporations, associations, agencies, or governmental entities
- 18 they represent. During sessions of the General Assembly, the commission shall weekly
- 19 report to the Clerk of the House of Representatives, the Secretary of the Senate, and the
- 20 Governor those persons who have registered as lobbyists since the convening of the
- 21 General Assembly. The commission shall be authorized to charge a reasonable fee for
- 22 providing copies of the roster to the public.
- 23 (i) The registration provisions of this Code section shall not apply to:
- 24 (1) Any individual who expresses personal views, on that individual's own behalf, to any
- 25 public officer;
- 26 (2) Any person who appears before a public agency or governmental entity committee
- 27 or hearing for the purpose of giving testimony when such person is not otherwise required
- 28 to comply with the registration provisions of this Code section;
- 29 (3) Any public employee of an agency appearing before a governmental entity
- 30 committee or hearing at the request of the governmental entity or any person who
- 31 furnishes information upon the specific request of a governmental entity;
- 32 (4) Any licensed attorney appearing on behalf of a client in any adversarial proceeding
- 33 before an agency of this state;
- 34 (5) Any person employed or appointed by a lobbyist registered pursuant to this Code
- 35 section whose duties and activities do not include lobbying;
- 36 (6) Elected public officers performing the official duties of their public office; and

1 (7) A public employee who performs services at the direction of a member of the  
 2 General Assembly including, but not limited to, drafting petitions, bills, or resolutions;  
 3 attending the taking of testimony; collating facts; preparing arguments and memorials and  
 4 submitting them orally or in writing to a committee or member of the General Assembly;  
 5 and other services of like character intended to reach the reason of the legislators."

### 6 SECTION 19.

7 Said chapter is further amended by striking Code Section 21-5-73, relating to disclosure  
 8 reports, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

9 "21-5-73.

10 (a) Each lobbyist registered under this article shall file disclosure reports as provided for  
 11 in this Code section. Beginning January 10, 2005, lobbyists shall file such reports by  
 12 electronic means.

13 (b) A person who is a lobbyist pursuant to subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) of paragraph (6)  
 14 of Code Section 21-5-70 shall file a monthly disclosure report, current through the end of  
 15 the preceding month, shall be filed on or before the fifth day of any month while the  
 16 General Assembly is in session.

17 (c) A person who is a lobbyist pursuant to subparagraph (D) or (E) of paragraph (6) of  
 18 Code Section 21-5-70 shall:

19 (1) File file a disclosure report, current through the end of the preceding month, on or  
 20 before the fifth day of May, September, and January of each year instead of the reports  
 21 otherwise required by ~~subsection (c)~~ subsections (b) and (d) of this Code section ~~and the~~  
 22 ~~first sentence of this subsection;~~ and

23 (2) File file such report with the commission, file a copy of such report with the election  
 24 superintendent of each county involved if the report contains any expenditures relating  
 25 to county or county school district affairs, and file a copy of such report with the  
 26 municipal clerk (or if there is no municipal clerk, with the chief executive officer of the  
 27 municipality) of each municipality involved if the report contains any expenditures  
 28 relating to municipal affairs or independent school district affairs.

29 (e)(d) A person who is a lobbyist pursuant to subparagraph (A), (B), (C), (F), (G), or (H)  
 30 of paragraph (6) of Code Section 21-5-70 shall file a disclosure report, current through the  
 31 end of the period ending on July 31 and December 31 of each year, shall be filed on or  
 32 before August 5 and January 5 of each year.

33 (d)(e) Reports filed by lobbyists shall be verified and shall include:

34 (1) A description of all expenditures, as defined in Code Section 21-5-70, or the value  
 35 thereof made by the lobbyist, or employees of the lobbyist, or employer or client of the

1 lobbyist on behalf or for the benefit of a public officer. The description of each reported  
2 expenditure shall include:

3 (A) The name and title of the public officer or, if the expenditure is simultaneously  
4 incurred for an identifiable group of public officers the individual identification of  
5 whom would be impractical, a general description of that identifiable group;

6 (B) The amount, date, and description of the expenditure;

7 (C) The provisions of Code Section 21-5-70 notwithstanding, aggregate expenditures  
8 described in divisions (1)(E)(vii) and (1)(E)(x) of Code Section 21-5-70 incurred during  
9 the reporting period; provided, however, expenses for travel and for food, beverage, and  
10 lodging in connection therewith afforded a public officer shall be reported in the same  
11 manner as under subparagraphs (A), (B), and (D) of this paragraph; and

12 (D) If applicable, the number of the bill, resolution, ordinance, rule, or regulation  
13 pending before the governmental entity in support of or opposition to which the  
14 expenditure was made; and

15 (2) The names of any public officer or any members of the immediate family of a public  
16 officer employed by or whose professional services are paid for by the lobbyist or any  
17 person on whose behalf a lobbyist is registered during the reporting period;

18 (3) For those who are lobbyists within the meaning of subparagraph (G) of paragraph (6)  
19 of Code Section 21-5-70, the name of any vendor or vendors for which the lobbyist  
20 undertook to influence the awarding of a contract or contracts by any state agency  
21 together with a description of the contract or contracts and the monetary amount of the  
22 contract or contracts;

23 (4) For those who are lobbyists within the meaning of subparagraph (H) of paragraph (6)  
24 of Code Section 21-5-70, a description, by number or otherwise, of any rule or regulation  
25 promoted or opposed by the lobbyist; and

26 (5) A good faith estimate of the total amount of all income from each person on whose  
27 behalf a lobbyist is registered, including any payments to the lobbyist by any other person  
28 for lobbying activities on behalf of the person on whose behalf a lobbyist is registered  
29 during the reporting period, other than income for matters that are unrelated to lobbying  
30 activities.

31 (f) The reports required by this article shall be in addition to any reports required under  
32 Code Section 45-1-6, relating to required reports by state vendors of gifts to public  
33 employees. Compliance with this Code section shall not excuse noncompliance with that  
34 Code section, and compliance with that Code section shall not excuse noncompliance with  
35 this Code section, notwithstanding the fact that in some cases the same information may  
36 be required to be disclosed under both Code sections."

**SECTION 20.**

Said chapter is further amended by adding new Code Sections 21-5-74, 21-5-75, 21-5-76, and 21-5-77 to follow Code Section 21-5-73 to read as follows:

"21-5-74.

A lobbyist shall not be eligible to serve or receive compensation as a public employee or be eligible for legislative or executive appointment to any state office, board, authority, commission, or bureau created and established by the laws of this state which regulates the activities of a business, firm, corporation, or agency that the lobbyist represented until one year after the expiration of the lobbyist's registration.

21-5-75.

(a) Neither a lobbyist nor any person on whose behalf a lobbyist is registered shall make any gift as defined in paragraph (2.1) of Code Section 21-5-70 to any public officer or employee or to any person on such public officer's or employee's staff or to the public officer's or employee's family, nor shall any such person accept a gift from a lobbyist or from any person on whose behalf a lobbyist is registered. If a gift is accepted, it must be returned or reimbursed to the donor. Where appropriate for purposes of tradition, ceremony, or intergovernmental relations, or when acting as a representative of a department, board, bureau, agency, commission, or authority, a public officer or employee may accept a gift on behalf of such department, board, bureau, agency, commission, or authority. If the gift retains value after its acceptance, the public officer or employee must maintain custody of the gift no longer than reasonably necessary to arrange for the transfer of custody of the gift to the public officer's or employee's department, board, bureau, agency, commission, or authority or to a charitable organization on behalf of such department, board, bureau, agency, commission, or authority.

(b)(1) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this Code section, a part-time public officer may accept a monetary fee or honorarium if:

(A) The public officer's private employment or profession requires public speaking; and

(B) The speaking engagement, seminar, discussion panel, or other activity does not relate to the official duties of the public officer.

(2) A part-time public officer who accepts a monetary fee or honorarium in accordance with this Code section shall file a financial disclosure statement in accordance with Code Section 21-5-50.

1 21-5-76.

2 On and after January 10, 2005, every public officer shall be prohibited from registering as  
3 a lobbyist or engaging in lobbying under this article for a period of one year after leaving  
4 such office.

5 21-5-77.

6 (a) No person, firm, corporation, or association shall retain or employ an attorney at law  
7 or an agent to aid or oppose legislation for compensation contingent, in whole or in part,  
8 upon the passage or defeat of any legislative measure or upon the receipt or award of any  
9 state contract. No attorney at law or agent shall be employed to aid or oppose legislation  
10 for compensation contingent, in whole or in part, upon the passage or defeat of any  
11 legislation or upon the receipt or award of any state contract.

12 (b) It shall be unlawful for any person registered pursuant to the requirements this article  
13 or for any other person, except as authorized by the rules of the House or Senate, to be on  
14 the floor of either house of the General Assembly while the same is in session to discuss  
15 privately measures then pending in the General Assembly."

16 **SECTION 20.1.**

17 Said chapter is further amended by adding a new article to the end of the chapter to read as  
18 follows:

19 "ARTICLE 4A

20 21-5-80.

21 Any candidate for the General Assembly who files a declaration of intent to accept  
22 campaign contributions pursuant to subsection (g) of Code Section 21-5-30 shall be issued  
23 a pledge to engage in ethical campaigning by the Secretary of State as set forth in Code  
24 Section 21-5-81.

25 21-5-81.

26 The text of the pledge shall read as follows:

27 **PLEDGE TO ENGAGE IN ETHICAL CAMPAIGNING**

28 Realizing that the principles of morality, honesty, and civility are essential to the integrity  
29 of the democratic process, I pledge to conduct a campaign consistent with these  
30 principles. I will refrain from campaign practices that in any way detract from the  
31 honorable pursuit of elective office. I shall not use or permit the use of character

1       defamation, libel, slander, or scurrilous attacks on any candidate or his or her personal  
2       or family life, nor shall I use or permit on my behalf misleading or untrue advertisements.

3       \_\_\_\_\_

4       Name of Candidate

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Witness

5       \_\_\_\_\_

6       Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Notary public’s signature and seal

7       \_\_\_\_\_

8       \_\_\_\_\_

9       Date

10    21-5-82.

11    Each candidate for the General Assembly who has filed the intention to accept campaign  
12    contributions shall acknowledge receipt of the pledge set forth in Code Section 21-5-81  
13    either by returning the pledge with his or her signature which has been witnessed and  
14    notarized or by returning a signed affidavit stating that he or she has received the pledge.  
15    The pledge shall be in effect for two years from the date of signing unless a candidate  
16    writes to the Secretary of State’s office and requests that his or her pledge be revoked.

17    21-5-83.

18    The Secretary of State’s office shall maintain on its website a list of candidates which  
19    indicates candidates who have signed the pledge or acknowledged the pledge in accordance  
20    with Code Section 21-5-82 or who have neither signed nor acknowledged the pledge.

21    21-5-84.

22    A registered voter may initiate a complaint pursuant to Code Section 21-5-7 against a  
23    candidate who is running for the General Assembly in his or her district for alleged  
24    violations of Code Section 21-5-82. The commission may issue an order after appropriate  
25    proceedings as provided for by this chapter and penalize the person who violates Code  
26    Section 21-5-82 by making public its conclusion as set forth in paragraph (15) of  
27    subsection (b) of Code Section 21-5-6.”

**SECTION 20.5.**

28       Said chapter is further amended by adding a new article to the end of the chapter to read as  
29       follows:  
30



1 “ARTICLE 5

2 21-5-90.

3 (a) A candidate is liable for any slander or libel, as defined and provided for in Chapter 5  
4 of Title 51, committed by a campaign committee that is controlled by that candidate if the  
5 candidate willfully and knowingly directs or permits the libel or slander.

6 (b) In addition to the action provided for in this Code section, the commission may issue  
7 an order after appropriate proceedings as provided for by this chapter, requiring the  
8 candidate whose committee committed the libel or slander to be fined as set forth in  
9 subparagraph (b)(14)(C) of Code Section 21-5-6 and may also make public its conclusion  
10 as provided in paragraph (15) of subsection (b) of Code Section 21-5-6.”

11 **SECTION 21.**

12 Title 36 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to local government, is amended  
13 by striking paragraph (2.1) of Code Section 36-67A-1, relating to definitions for conflicts of  
14 interest in zoning actions, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

15 “(2.1) 'Campaign contribution' means a 'contribution' as defined in paragraph ~~(6)~~ (7) of  
16 Code Section 21-5-3.”

17 **SECTION 22.**

18 Title 42 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to penal institutions, is amended  
19 by striking Code Section 42-9-17, relative to appearances before the Board of Pardons and  
20 Paroles by members of the General Assembly or state elected or appointed officials, and  
21 inserting in lieu thereof the following:

22 “42-9-17.

23 (a) It shall be unlawful for members of the General Assembly or any other state elected  
24 or appointed official to ~~accept any compensation for appearing before~~ contact the board in  
25 ~~behalf of~~ with respect to a person under the jurisdiction of the board ~~and for seeking a~~  
26 ~~decision on behalf of the person.~~ Nothing in this Code section shall be construed so as to  
27 prohibit:

28 (1) Members of the General Assembly or state elected or appointed officials from  
29 appearing before the board when their official duties require them to do so; ~~or~~

30 (2) Members of the General Assembly or state elected or appointed officials from  
31 requesting information from ~~and presenting information to~~ the board ~~on behalf of~~  
32 ~~constituents when no compensation, gift, favor, or anything of value is accepted, either~~  
33 ~~directly or indirectly, for such services;~~

1 (3) Members of the General Assembly or state elected or appointed officials from  
 2 forwarding correspondence or communications received from third parties to the board,  
 3 so long as the correspondence or communications are forwarded in substantially the same  
 4 form in which they were received;

5 (4) The Attorney General, assistant attorney general, judge, district attorney, assistant  
 6 district attorney, solicitor-general, assistant solicitor-general, or public defender as  
 7 defined in Code Section 17-12-2 while acting in his or her official capacity; or

8 (5) Members of the General Assembly who are attorneys representing clients from  
 9 appearing before the board.

10 ~~(b) Nothing in subsection (a) of this Code section shall be construed to apply to the~~  
 11 ~~acceptance of compensation, expenses, and allowances received by members of the~~  
 12 ~~General Assembly or any other state elected or appointed official for their duties as such~~  
 13 ~~members or officials.~~

14 ~~(c)~~(b) Any person who violates subsection (a) of this Code section shall be guilty of a  
 15 misdemeanor."

### 16 SECTION 23.

17 Title 45 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to public officers, is amended  
 18 by striking Code Section 45-1-4, relating to complaints or information regarding fraud,  
 19 waste, and abuse in state programs and operations, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

20 "45-1-4.

21 (a) As used in this Code section, the term:

22 (1) 'Government agency' means any agency of federal, state, or local government  
 23 charged with the enforcement of laws, rules, or regulations.

24 (2) 'Law, rule, or regulation' includes any federal, state, or local statute or ordinance or  
 25 any rule or regulation adopted according to any federal, state, or local statute or  
 26 ordinance.

27 ~~(1)~~(3) 'Public employee' means any person who is employed by the executive, judicial,  
 28 or legislative branch of the state or by any other department, board, bureau, commission,  
 29 authority, or other agency of the state except the office of the Governor, the judicial  
 30 branch, or the legislative branch. This term also includes all employees, officials, or  
 31 administrators of any agency covered under the State Merit System of Personnel  
 32 Administration and any local or regional governmental entity that receives any funds  
 33 from the State of Georgia or any state agency.

34 ~~(2)~~(4) 'Public employer' means the executive, judicial, or legislative branch of the state  
 35 and or any other department, board, bureau, commission, authority, or other agency of  
 36 the state which employs or appoints a public employee or public employees except the

1 ~~office of the Governor, the judicial branch, or the legislative branch~~ or any local or  
 2 regional governmental entity that receives any funds from the State of Georgia or any  
 3 state agency.

4 (5) 'Retaliate' or 'retaliation' refers to the discharge, suspension, or demotion by a public  
 5 employer of a public employee or any other adverse employment action taken by a public  
 6 employer against a public employee in the terms or conditions of employment.

7 (6) 'Supervisor' means any individual:

8 (A) To whom a public employer has given authority to direct and control the work  
 9 performance of the affected public employee;

10 (B) To whom a public employer has given authority to take corrective action regarding  
 11 a violation of or noncompliance with a law, rule, or regulation of which the public  
 12 employee complains; or

13 (C) Who has been designated by a public employer to receive complaints regarding a  
 14 violation of or noncompliance with a law, rule, or regulation.

15 (b) A public employer may receive and investigate complaints or information from any  
 16 public employee concerning the possible existence of any activity constituting fraud, waste,  
 17 and abuse in or relating to any state programs and operations under the jurisdiction of such  
 18 public employer.

19 (c) Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, such public employer shall not after  
 20 receipt of a complaint or information from a public employee disclose the identity of the  
 21 public employee without the written consent of such public employee, unless the public  
 22 employer determines such disclosure is necessary and unavoidable during the course of the  
 23 investigation. In such event, the public employee shall be notified in writing at least seven  
 24 days prior to such disclosure.

25 ~~(d) No action against any public employee shall be taken or threatened by any public~~  
 26 ~~employer who has authority to take, direct others to take, recommend, or approve any~~  
 27 ~~personnel action as a reprisal for making a complaint or disclosing information to the~~  
 28 ~~public employer unless the complaint was made or the information was disclosed with the~~  
 29 ~~knowledge that it was false or with willful disregard for its truth or falsity.~~

30 (d)(1) No public employer shall make, adopt, or enforce any policy or practice  
 31 preventing a public employee from disclosing or threatening to disclose a violation of or  
 32 noncompliance with a law, rule, or regulation to either a supervisor or a government  
 33 agency.

34 (2) No public employer shall retaliate against a public employee for disclosing or  
 35 threatening to disclose a violation of or noncompliance with a law, rule, or regulation to  
 36 either a supervisor or a government agency, unless the disclosure or threatened disclosure

1 was made with knowledge that the disclosure was false or with reckless disregard for its  
 2 truth or falsity.

3 (3) No public employer shall retaliate against a public employee for objecting to, or  
 4 refusing to participate in, any activity, policy, or practice of the public employer that the  
 5 public employee has reasonable cause to believe is in violation of or noncompliance with  
 6 a law, rule, or regulation.

7 (4) Paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of this subsection shall not apply to policies or practices  
 8 which implement, or to actions by public employers against public employees who  
 9 violate, privilege or confidentiality obligations recognized by constitutional, statutory, or  
 10 common law.

11 ~~(e) Any action taken in violation of subsection (d) of this Code section shall give the~~  
 12 ~~public employee a right to have such action set aside in a proceeding instituted in the~~  
 13 ~~superior court.~~

14 (e)(1) A public employee who has been the object of retaliation in violation of this Code  
 15 section may institute a civil action in superior court for relief as set forth in paragraph (2)  
 16 of this subsection within one year after discovering the retaliation or within three years  
 17 after the retaliation, whichever is earlier.

18 (2) In any action brought pursuant to this subsection, the court may order any or all of  
 19 the following relief:

20 (A) An injunction restraining continued violation of this Code section;

21 (B) Reinstatement of the employee to the same position held before the retaliation or  
 22 to an equivalent position;

23 (C) Reinstatement of full fringe benefits and seniority rights;

24 (D) Compensation for lost wages, benefits, and other remuneration; and

25 (E) Any other compensatory damages allowable at law.

26 (f) A court may award reasonable attorney's fees, court costs, and expenses to a prevailing  
 27 public employee."

### 28 **SECTION 23.1.**

29 Said title is further amended by inserting a new paragraph in Code Section 45-10-1 to  
 30 state as follows:

31 45-10-1.

32 There is established for and within the state and for and in all governments therein a code  
 33 of ethics for government service which shall read as follows:

#### 34 **CODE OF ETHICS FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICE**

35 Any person in government service should:

- 1 I. Put loyalty to the highest moral principles and to country above loyalty to persons,  
 2 party, or government department.
- 3 II. Uphold the Constitution, laws, and legal regulations of the United States and the State  
 4 of Georgia and of all governments therein and never be a party to their evasion.
- 5 III. Be honest and truthful in all statements and representations made before the General  
 6 Assembly and its committees, the State's departments, commissions and board, and the  
 7 courts of the State of Georgia and the United States of America.
- 8 ~~III.~~ IV. Give a full day's labor for a full day's pay and give to the performance of his  
 9 duties his earnest effort and best thought.
- 10 ~~IV.~~ V. Seek to find and employ more efficient and economical ways of getting tasks  
 11 accomplished.
- 12 ~~V.~~ VI. Never discriminate unfairly by the dispensing of special favors or privileges to  
 13 anyone, whether for remuneration or not, and never accept, for himself or his family,  
 14 favors or benefits under circumstances which might be construed by reasonable persons  
 15 as influencing the performance of his governmental duties.
- 16 ~~VI.~~ VII. Make no private promises of any kind binding upon the duties of office, since a  
 17 government employee has no private word which can be binding on public duty.
- 18 ~~VII.~~ VIII. Engage in no business with the government, either directly or indirectly, which  
 19 is inconsistent with the conscientious performance of his governmental duties.
- 20 ~~VIII.~~ IX. Never use any information coming to him confidentially in the performance of  
 21 governmental duties as a means for making private profit.
- 22 IX. Expose corruption wherever discovered.
- 23 XI. Uphold these principles, ever conscious that public office is a public trust.

#### 24 SECTION 24.

25 Said title is further amended by striking Code Section 45-10-3, relating to code of ethics  
 26 for members of boards, commissions, and authorities, and inserting in lieu thereof the  
 27 following:

28 "45-10-3.

29 Notwithstanding any provisions of law to the contrary, each ~~member of all boards,~~  
 30 ~~commissions, and authorities created by general statute~~ public official and employee as  
 31 those terms defined in Code Section 45-10-20 shall:

- 32 (1) Uphold the Constitution, laws, and regulations of the United States, the State of  
 33 Georgia, and all governments therein and never be a party to their evasion;
- 34 (2) Never discriminate by the dispensing of special favors or privileges to anyone,  
 35 whether or not for remuneration;

- 1 (3) Not engage in any business with the government, either directly or indirectly,  
 2 which is inconsistent with the conscientious performance of his or her governmental  
 3 duties;
- 4 (4) Never use any information coming to him or her confidentially in the performance  
 5 of governmental duties as a means for making private profit;
- 6 (5) Expose corruption wherever discovered;
- 7 (6) Never solicit, accept, or agree to accept gifts, loans, gratuities, discounts, favors,  
 8 hospitality, or services from any person, association, or corporation under  
 9 circumstances from which it could reasonably be inferred that a major purpose of the  
 10 donor is to influence the performance of the member's official duties;
- 11 (7) Never accept any economic opportunity under circumstances where he or she  
 12 knows or should know that there is a substantial possibility that the opportunity is  
 13 being afforded him or her with intent to influence his or her conduct in the  
 14 performance of his or her official duties;
- 15 (8) Never engage in other conduct which is unbecoming to a member or which  
 16 constitutes a breach of public trust; and
- 17 (9) Never take any official action with regard to any matter under circumstances in  
 18 which he or she knows or should know that he or she has a direct or indirect monetary  
 19 interest in the subject matter of such matter or in the outcome of such official action."

## 20 SECTION 25.

21 Said title is further amended by striking Code Section 45-10-4, relating to code of ethics  
 22 for members of boards, commissions, and authorities, and inserting in lieu thereof the  
 23 following:

24 "45-10-4.

25 (a)(1) Upon formal charges being filed with the ~~Governor~~ State Ethics Commission  
 26 relative to a violation of Code Section 45-10-3, Part 1 of Article 2 of this chapter, or  
 27 both, on the part of a ~~member of any such board, commission, or authority~~ public  
 28 official or employee, the ~~Governor or his~~ State Ethics Commission or its designated  
 29 agent shall conduct a ~~hearing for the purpose of receiving evidence relative to the~~  
 30 ~~merits of such charges. The member so charged shall be given at least 30 days' notice~~  
 31 ~~prior to such hearing. If such charges are found to be true, the Governor shall~~  
 32 ~~forthwith remove such member from office and the vacancy shall be filled as provided~~  
 33 ~~by law. Such hearing shall be held in accordance with Chapter 13 of Title 50, the~~  
 34 ~~'Georgia Administrative Procedure Act,' and judicial review of any such decision shall~~  
 35 ~~be in accordance with such chapter~~ preliminary investigation of the merits of a written  
 36 complaint by any person who believes that a violation of Code Section 45-10-3, Part 1

1 of Article 2 of this chapter, or both, has occurred, verified under oath to the best  
 2 information, knowledge, and belief by the person making such complaint. If there are  
 3 found no reasonable grounds to believe that a violation has occurred, the complaint  
 4 shall be dismissed, subject to being reopened upon discovery of additional evidence or  
 5 relevant material. If the commission determines that there are such reasonable  
 6 grounds to believe that a violation has occurred, it shall give notice by summoning the  
 7 persons believed to have committed the violation to a hearing. The hearing shall be  
 8 conducted in all respects in accordance with Chapter 13 of Title 50, the 'Georgia  
 9 Administrative Procedure Act.' The commission may file a complaint charging  
 10 violations of Code Section 45-10-3, Part 1 of Article 2 of this chapter, or both, and  
 11 any person aggrieved by the final decision of the commission is entitled to judicial  
 12 review in accordance with Chapter 13 of Title 50; provided, however, that nothing in  
 13 this Code section shall be construed to limit or encumber the right of the commission  
 14 to initiate on probable cause an investigation on its own cognizance as it deems  
 15 necessary to fulfill its obligations under Code Section 45-10-3, Part 1 of Article 2 of  
 16 this chapter, or both.

17 (2) In any preliminary investigation referenced in paragraph (1) of this subsection,  
 18 until such time as the commission determines that there are reasonable grounds to  
 19 believe that a violation has occurred, it shall not be necessary to give the notice by  
 20 summons nor to conduct a hearing in accordance with Chapter 13 of Title 50, the  
 21 'Georgia Administrative Procedure Act.'

22 (b) If such charges are found to be true as against a member of any board, commission,  
 23 or authority created by general statute, the Governor may forthwith remove such  
 24 member from office and the vacancy shall be filled as provided by law.

25 (c)(1) The State Ethics Commission shall have the same powers and duties with  
 26 respect to this Code section, Code Section 45-10-3, and Part 1 of Article 2 of this  
 27 chapter as the commission has with respect to Chapter 5 of Title 21.

28 (2) The Attorney General shall have the same powers and duties with respect to this  
 29 Code section, Code Section 45-10-3, and Part 1 of Article 2 of this chapter as the  
 30 Attorney General has with respect to Chapter 5 of Title 21. Without limiting the  
 31 generality of the foregoing it is specifically provided that the Attorney General may  
 32 bring civil actions for the enforcement of this Code section, Code Section 45-10-3,  
 33 and Part 1 of Article 2 of this chapter in the same general manner as provided in  
 34 Chapter 5 of Title 21."

**SECTION 26.**

Said title is further amended by striking Code Section 45-10-5, relating to authority to enact rules and regulations, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

"45-10-5.

~~No member of any board, commission, or authority created by general statute shall enact any rules or regulations or publicize such as being general laws and such rules and regulations shall in no way have the effect of law. The provisions of Code Sections 45-10-3 and 45-10-4 or Part 1 of Article 2 of this chapter are in addition to or cumulative of any other criminal penalties imposed by law. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, an administrative or civil enforcement action brought pursuant to Code Sections 45-10-3 and 45-10-4 or Part 1 of Article 2 of this chapter shall not bar the prosecution of any violation of the criminal law of this state.~~"

**SECTION 27.**

Said title is further amended by adding a new part at the end of Article 2 of Chapter 10, relating to conflicts of interest, to read as follows:

"Part 5

45-10-80.

(a) Every public officer is prohibited from advocating for or causing the advancement, appointment, employment, promotion, or transfer of a family member to an office or position that pays an annual salary of \$10,000.00 or more or its equivalent.

(b) Any person advanced, appointed, employed, promoted, or transferred in violation of this Code section shall not be entitled to any payment, salary, or benefits received for any position so illegally obtained; and any person who receives payment, salary, or benefits for a position obtained in violation of this Code section shall be required to reimburse the state for all amounts so received."

**SECTION 28.**

Said title is further amended by adding a new Code Section 45-12-61 to follow Code Section 45-12-60 to read as follows:

"45-12-61.

(a) As used in this Code section, the terms 'campaign committee,' 'contribution,' and 'expenditure' shall have the meanings set forth in Code Section 21-5-3.

(b) No person shall be eligible for appointment to fill a vacancy on any board, council, or commission or on the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, the superior courts, or



1 the state courts if the person has made a contribution to or expenditure on behalf of the  
2 Governor or the Governor's campaign committee in the previous 120 days.”

3 **SECTION 29.**

4 This Act shall become effective on January 10, 2005.

5 **SECTION 30.**

6 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.