

WHEREAS, The Maryland Public Ethics Law was enacted in 1979 to assure the people of this State that the operations of government are free from improper influence and the appearance of improper influence; and

WHEREAS, The Ethics Law regulates not only officials and public employees, but also persons who lobby on behalf of private sector interests; and

WHEREAS, While officials and employees are subject to an extensive code of ethical conduct under the Ethics Law, regulated lobbyists are generally subject only to financial reporting requirements, administered by the State Ethics Commission; and

WHEREAS, Since the enactment of the Ethics Law 20 years ago, the business of lobbying has grown enormously, with a substantial increase in the number of regulated lobbyists, their compensation, and their impact on the legislative process and the functioning of the Executive Branch; and

~~WHEREAS, Consideration should be given to moving the offices of the State Ethics Commission, which regulates persons who lobby the Governor and General Assembly, from Towson to Annapolis; and~~

WHEREAS, In 1998, the General Assembly created a special study commission to revise the law relating to legislative ethics, but did not authorize that commission to review the provisions of the Ethics Law relating to regulated lobbyists; and

WHEREAS, The people of Maryland have a right to be assured that the practice of lobbying is carried out in a way that enhances the public welfare and does not subject our government to improper influence or create the appearance of improper influence; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That:

(a) There is a Study Commission on Lobbyist Ethics.

(b) The Study Commission shall consist of the following ~~11~~ 13 members:

~~(1) Three individuals, at least one of whom shall be a member of the Senate of Maryland and one of whom shall be a regulated lobbyist, appointed by the President of the Senate;~~

~~(2) Three individuals, at least one of whom shall be a member of the House of Delegates and one of whom shall be a regulated lobbyist, appointed by the Speaker of the House; and~~

~~(3) Five individuals, at least one of whom shall be a member of the State Ethics Commission and one of whom shall be a regulated lobbyist, appointed by the Governor.~~

(1) Four individuals appointed by the President of the Senate, including:

(i) At least two members of the Senate of Maryland;

(ii) A least one regulated lobbyist; and