

It is also essential to the proper operation of a government that those best qualified be encouraged to serve the government and that safeguards against conflicts of interest be designed so as not to unnecessarily or unreasonably impede the entry into, or retention by government, of those best qualified to serve it. The opportunity of the Legislator to acquire and retain private economic interests should not be restricted, except when these conflict with his public responsibility. It is the Legislator's use of public office to which such restrictions are directed, and not his legitimate private affairs.

**SECTION 1.** *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland,* That new Sections 89, 90 and 91 be and the same are hereby added to Article 40 of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1971 Replacement Volume) (1971 Supplement), title "General Assembly," to follow immediately after Section 88 thereof, and to be under the new subtitle "Ethics," and to read as follows :

89.

(a) *The Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics is established. There shall be ten members of the Committee, five to be members of the Senate of Maryland and five to be members of the House of Delegates of Maryland, and these members shall include ex officio, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Delegates. The appointments shall be made by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House who shall also appoint a chairman and vice-chairman. The appointees shall serve at the pleasure of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House.*

90.

(a) *It is the function of the Committee:*

(1) *To promulgate rules of legislative ethics with respect to conflicts of interest governing members of the General Assembly. The rules shall be presented by a joint resolution and become effective after adoption by a constitutional majority of each House voting separately.*

(2) *To issue guidelines and establish procedures for the implementation of rules adopted.*

(3) *To issue advisory opinions upon request of members of the General Assembly regarding legislative ethics concerning an action taken or contemplated by any member.*

(4) *To maintain public records as the rules require.*

91.

(a) *The Committee shall meet at times it deems appropriate. Its members shall serve without compensation for services rendered to the Committee, but shall be paid their necessary expenses in carrying out their obligations under this subtitle.*

**SEC. 2.** *And be it further enacted,* That if any provision of this Act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid for any reason, the invalidity shall not affect the other provisions or any other application of this Act which can be given effect without the invalid provisions or application, and to this end all the provisions of this Act are declared to be severable.