

granting them immunity from prosecution or from penalty or forfeiture. The Commission shall have the power to recommend to the Court of Appeals the removal or retirement of a judge. All proceedings, testimony, and evidence before the Commission shall be confidential and privileged, except that the record and any proceeding filed with the Court of Appeals shall lose its confidential character. No judge shall participate in any proceedings involving his own removal or retirement, and the governor shall appoint another judge as a substitute member of the Commission for those proceedings, the Court of Appeals shall prescribe by rule the means to implement and enforce the powers of the Commission and the practice and procedure before the Commission.

(b) Upon recommendation of the Commission that a judge be removed from office, or that he be retired, the Court of Appeals, after a hearing and upon a finding of misconduct while in office, or of persistent failure to perform the duties of his office, or of conduct prejudicial to the proper administration of justice, may remove the judge from office or may censure him, or the Court of Appeals, after hearing and upon a finding of disability which is or is likely to become permanent and which seriously interferes with the performance of his duties, may retire the judge from office. A judge removed under this section, and his surviving spouse, shall have the rights and privileges accruing from his judicial service only to the extent prescribed by the order of removal. A judge retiring under this section shall have the rights and privileges prescribed by law for other retired judges. No judge shall sit in judgment in any hearing involving his own removal or retirement.

(c) This section is alternative to, and cumulative with, the methods of retirement and removal provided in Sections 3 and 4 of this Article, and in Section 26 of Article III of this Constitution.

¹ SEC. 5. Upon every occurrence or recurrence of a vacancy through death, resignation, removal, disqualification by reason of age or otherwise, or expiration of the term of fifteen years of any judge, or creation of the office of any judge, or in any other way, the Governor shall appoint a person duly qualified to fill said office, who shall hold the same until the election and qualification of his successor; except that when a vacancy shall exist in the office of Chief Judge of the Supreme Bench of Baltimore City, the Governor may designate an Associate Judge of said Supreme

¹ Thus amended by Chapter 703, Acts of 1945, ratified November 5, 1946.