

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That section(s) of the Annotated Code of Maryland be repealed, amended, or enacted to read as follows:

Article 40A - Maryland Public Ethics Law

Title 1.

General Provisions.

Subtitle 1. Short Title, Legislative Policy, and Conflicts of Law.

1-101. Short Title.

This article may be cited as the Maryland Public Ethics Law.

1-102. Legislative findings and statement of policy

(a) The General Assembly of Maryland, recognizing that our system of representative government is dependent in part upon the people maintaining the highest trust in their public officials and officers, finds and declares that the people have a right to be assured that the impartiality and independent judgment of public officials and officers will be maintained.

(b) It is evident that this confidence and trust is eroded when the conduct of the State's business is subject to improper influence and even the appearance of improper influence.

(c) For the purpose of guarding against improper influence, the General Assembly enacts this Public Ethics Law to require State officials and public officials to disclose their financial affairs and to set minimum standards for their conduct of State and local business.

(d) It is the intention of the General Assembly that this article, except its provisions for criminal sanctions, be liberally construed to accomplish this purpose.

1-103. Conflicts of laws.

Other provisions of law or regulations relating to conflicts of interest, financial disclosure, or lobbying disclosure shall apply where the provisions of those laws or regulations are more stringent than this article.

Subtitle 2. Definitions:

1-201. Definitions.

(a) In general. -- In this article, the following words have the meanings indicated unless: