

opinion on the facts. The advisory opinion, with deletions and changes necessary to protect the legislator's identity, shall be filed with the presiding officer of the legislator's branch of the legislature for recordation with the Clerk of the House of Delegates or Secretary of the Senate; and the advisory opinion shall be kept and indexed in relation to the subject matter for the purpose of building a body of case law.

(i) Complaint of violation to or by Committee. -- Any person may file with the Committee a written statement, accompanied by an affidavit, charging a violation of the provisions of this title. The Committee on its own may file a complaint alleging a violation of the provisions of this section. The statement is confidential, and neither its contents nor the fact that it has been filed may be made public, unless a report thereon is made pursuant to subsection (l).

(j) Preliminary investigation. -- The Committee shall make a preliminary investigation of the charges in the statement.

(k) Procedure after preliminary investigation. --  
(1) If the Committee determines after the preliminary investigation that there has been no violation of this title the matter is closed, and the proceedings may not be made public unless the legislator, in writing, so requests.

(2) If the Committee determines after the preliminary investigation that possibly there was a violation of this title, the legislator shall be notified of the statement and allowed 15 days to file a written answer to the charges in the statement.

(3) Upon receiving the legislator's answer, the Committee may either (1) dismiss the charges, in which case the matter is closed, and the proceedings may not be made public unless the legislator, in writing, so requests; or (2) schedule a formal hearing on the charges, within 20 days after giving notice to the person who filed the statement and to the legislator.

(4) The hearing may not be open to the public. The legislator may present evidence, cross-examine witnesses, face and examine his accuser, and be represented by counsel.

(1) Procedure after formal hearing. -- (1) If after a formal hearing the Committee determines that sufficient grounds exist for a question of substantial conflict of interest, the Committee shall report its findings to the branch of the legislature of which the legislator is a member, accompanied by a request that an investigating committee be established to determine if a violation of this section has occurred.