

ACT 291

S.B. NO. 757

A Bill for an Act Relating to Statute of Limitations for the State Ethics Commission.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. Section 84-19, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

“(b) The State by the attorney general may recover any fee, compensation, gift, or profit received by any person as a result of a violation of the code of ethics by a legislator or employee or former legislator or employee. Action to recover under this subsection shall be brought within [two years] one year of a determination of such violation.”

SECTION 2. Section 84-31, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

- “(a) The ethics commission shall have the following powers and duties:
- (1) It shall prescribe forms for the disclosures required by Article XIV of the Hawaii Constitution and section 84-17 and the statements and reports required by sections 97-2 and 97-3 and shall establish orderly procedures for implementing the requirements of those provisions.
 - (2) It shall render advisory opinions upon the request of any legislator, employee, or delegate to the constitutional convention, or person formerly holding such office or employment as to whether the facts and circumstances of a particular case constitute or will constitute a violation of the code of ethics. It shall also render advisory opinions to persons subject to chapter 97. If no advisory opinion is rendered within thirty days after the request is filed with the commission, it shall be deemed that an advisory opinion was rendered and that the facts and circumstances of that particular case do not constitute a violation of the code of ethics. The opinion rendered or deemed rendered, until amended or revoked, shall be binding on the commission in any subsequent charges concerning the legislator, employee, or delegate to the constitutional convention, or person formerly holding such office or employment, or person subject to chapter 97 who sought the opinion and acted in reliance on it in good faith, unless material facts were omitted or misstated by such persons in the request for an advisory opinion.
 - (3) It shall initiate, receive, and consider charges concerning alleged violation of this chapter, initiate or make investigation, and hold hearings.
 - (4) It may subpoena witnesses, administer oaths, and take testimony relating to matters before the commission and require the production for examination of any books or papers relative to any matter under investigation or in question before the commission. Before the commission shall exercise any of the powers authorized herein with respect to any investigation or hearings it shall by formal resolution, supported by a vote of three or more members of the commission, define the nature and scope of its inquiry.
 - (5) It may, from time to time make, amend, and repeal such rules [and regulations], not inconsistent with this chapter as in the judgment of the commission seem appropriate for the carrying out of this chapter and for the efficient administration thereof, including every matter or thing required to be done or which may be done with the approval or consent or by order or under the direction or supervision of or as prescribed by the commission. The rules [and regulations], when adopted as provided in chapter 91, shall have the force and effect of law.
 - (6) It shall have jurisdiction for purposes of investigation and taking appropriate action on alleged violations of this chapter in all proceedings commenced within [one year after termination of state employment by a legislator or employee.] three years of an alleged violation of this

chapter by a legislator or employee or former legislator or employee. A proceeding shall be deemed commenced by the filing of a charge with the commission or by the signing of a charge by three or more members of the commission. Nothing herein shall bar proceedings against a person who by fraud or other device, prevents discovery of a violation of this chapter. [A proceeding shall be deemed commenced by the signing of a charge by three or more members of the commission.]

- (7) It shall distribute its publications without cost to the public and shall initiate and maintain programs with the purpose of educating the citizenry and all legislators, delegates to the constitutional convention, and employees on matters of ethics in government employment.
- (8) It shall administer any code of ethics adopted by a state constitutional convention, subject to the procedural requirements of this part and any rules adopted thereunder.
- (9) It shall perform the duties and fulfill the functions assigned to it by chapter 97, relating to registration of lobbyists."

SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved June 13, 1989.)