

HB 2595: LEGISLATOR TO LOBBYIST WAITING PERIOD

Prepared by the Office of Representative Julie Fahey · 1/30/2018

BACKGROUND

According to NCSL research, in 38 states, former legislators must wait at least one year to become paid lobbyists (26 states use one year, 11 states plus the MN House use 2 years or more). The intention of these “revolving door” waiting periods is to limit the ability of elected officials to use their elected positions for their own personal financial gain.

In 2007, Oregon passed Senate Bill 10, which prohibited legislators from becoming paid lobbyists until sine die of the next regular session that begins after they are no longer a legislator¹.

Currently, with a regular long session in odd years and a regular short session in even years, the waiting period can range from about 5 weeks (if a legislator resigns just before the start of the short session) to as long as 17 months (if a legislator resigns just after the start of the short session). For legislators who complete their regular term, the waiting period is approximately 5-6 months. This range means that Oregon is out of line with the ethics practices of the vast majority of other states.

SOLUTION

HB 2595 would change Oregon’s waiting period to one calendar year from when a member ceases to be a member of the Legislative Assembly. This change would put Oregon in line with the majority of states’ policies on this issue.

¹ SB 10 counted the first special session in 2008 and 2010 as regular sessions for the purposes of the waiting period.