

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

## An Act To Amend the Laws Governing Legislative Ethics

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

**Sec. 1. 1 MRSA §1009**, as enacted by PL 2005, c. 301, §2, is amended to read:

### § 1009. Recommendations to Legislature

Following a general election, the commission may solicit suggestions for improving campaign financing and reporting and the administration of the other areas within the commission's jurisdiction. The commission shall review the suggestions and may submit legislation within 90 days of the general election based on those suggestions or on proposals by individual members of the commission or its staff.

**Sec. 2. 1 MRSA §1012, sub-§2-A** is enacted to read:

**2-A. Domestic partner.** "Domestic partner" means the partner of a Legislator who:

A. Has been legally domiciled with the Legislator for at least 12 months;

B. Is not legally married to or legally separated from an individual;

C. Is the sole partner of the Legislator and expects to remain so; and

D. Is jointly responsible with the Legislator for each other's common welfare as evidenced by joint living arrangements, joint financial arrangements or joint ownership of real or personal property.

**Sec. 3. 1 MRSA §1012, sub-§6**, as enacted by PL 1989, c. 561, §4, is amended to read:

**6. Immediate family.** "Immediate family" means a Legislator's spouse, domestic partner or dependent children.

**Sec. 4. 1 MRSA §1012, sub-§8**, as enacted by PL 1989, c. 561, §4, is amended to read:

**8. Relative.** "Relative" means an individual who is related to the Legislator or the Legislator's spouse as father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, great aunt, great uncle, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, domestic partner, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, granddaughter, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother or half sister, and ~~shall be deemed to include~~includes the fiance or fiancée of the Legislator.

## SUMMARY

This bill clarifies that the Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices may submit to the Legislature legislative proposals by commission members and staff in addition to legislative proposals based on suggestions from outside sources, as permitted in current law. The bill also defines "domestic

partner" in the legislative ethics laws for purposes of conflicts of interest and annual reporting of sources of Legislators' income.