

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Authors: Hansen and others

Subject: Definition of public official, campaign finance, and public disclosure

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Section 1 adds judges and county commissioners to the definition of "public official" under the campaign finance and public disclosure law. Sections 2 and 4 provide certain exceptions for judges when they are already covered under the Code of Judicial Conduct.

In effect, the bill would require county commissioners to:

- (1) file statements of economic interest with the board;
- (2) subject them to certain conflicts of interest and disclosure procedures in chapter 10A; and
- (3) subject them to the statutory gift ban.

Judges would be required to file statements of economic interest with the board and remain subject to the statutory gift ban.

Section 5 provides that if an official is both a public official and a local official (i.e., certain metropolitan commissioners), the official would only have to file the statement of economic interest with the board. They would not have to file a second time with the local political subdivision.

Section 3 strikes duplicative language since a "public official" would now include a judge. Section 6 provides that the act is effective January 1, 2014, and applies to public officials elected or appointed on or after that date.

Background: There are 447 county commissioners (43 in the metropolitan area). There are 81 counties with five-member county boards, and six counties with seven-member boards (Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Olmsted, Ramsey, and St. Louis).

There are 289 district court judges, 19 appeals court judges, and seven state Supreme Court judges.