

By: Howard

H.B. No. 1354

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT  
2 relating to the creation of a select interim committee to undertake  
3 a comprehensive review of personal financial disclosures made to  
4 the Texas Ethics Commission and certain other authorities.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

6 SECTION 1. INTERIM STUDY REGARDING PERSONAL FINANCIAL  
7 DISCLOSURES. (a) A select interim committee is created to study  
8 and review the procedures and effects of the filing of personal  
9 financial statements with the Texas Ethics Commission or other  
10 authorities under Chapter 572, Government Code, or other similar  
11 laws.

12 (b) The study must consider:

13 (1) the purposes of the current disclosure statutes  
14 and whether the statutes accomplish those purposes;

15 (2) the effectiveness of the current disclosure  
16 scheme; and

17 (3) what changes, if any, should be made to more  
18 effectively accomplish the purposes of personal financial  
19 disclosures.

20 (c) The committee is composed of:

21 (1) five members appointed by the lieutenant governor  
22 as follows:

23 (A) two senators;

24 (B) one representative of an open government

1 advocacy organization;

2 (C) one representative of an organization  
3 representing professional media; and

4 (D) one member of the public;

5 (2) five members appointed by the speaker of the house  
6 of representatives as follows:

7 (A) two state representatives;

8 (B) one representative of an open government  
9 advocacy organization;

10 (C) one representative of an organization  
11 representing professional media; and

12 (D) one member of the public; and

13 (3) one member of the Texas Ethics Commission,  
14 appointed by the presiding officer of the Texas Ethics Commission,  
15 who shall serve as the presiding officer of the committee.

16 (d) The committee shall convene at the call of the presiding  
17 officer.

18 (e) The committee has all other powers and duties provided  
19 to a special or select committee by the rules of the senate and  
20 house of representatives, by Subchapter B, Chapter 301, Government  
21 Code, and by policies of the senate and house committees on  
22 administration.

23 (f) Not later than January 15, 2017, the committee shall  
24 report the committee's findings and recommendations to the  
25 lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives,  
26 and the governor. The committee shall include in its  
27 recommendations specific statutory and rule changes that appear

1 necessary from the results of the committee's study under  
2 Subsection (a) of this section.

3 (g) Not later than the 60th day after the effective date of  
4 this Act, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of  
5 representatives, and the presiding officer of the Texas Ethics  
6 Commission shall appoint the members of the committee created under  
7 this section.

8 (h) The Texas Legislative Council and the Texas Ethics  
9 Commission shall provide any necessary staff and resources to the  
10 committee created under this section.

11 SECTION 2. ABOLITION OF COMMITTEE. The committee is  
12 abolished and this Act expires January 20, 2017.

13 SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act takes effect  
14 immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members  
15 elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas  
16 Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for  
17 immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2015.