

By: Hall

S.J.R. No. 44

A JOINT RESOLUTION

1 proposing a constitutional amendment to change the number, method
2 of appointment, and terms of members of the Texas Ethics Commission
3 and providing for the governance, purpose, and mission of the
4 commission.

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

6 SECTION 1. Section [24a](#), Article III, Texas Constitution, is
7 amended by amending Subsections (a), (b), and (c) and adding
8 Subsection (c-1) to read as follows:

9 (a) The Texas Ethics Commission is a state agency consisting
10 of the following six ~~[eight]~~ members:

11 (1) three ~~[two]~~ members of the same political party as
12 the governor, ~~[different political parties]~~ appointed by the
13 governor ~~[from a list of at least 10 names submitted by the members~~
14 ~~of the house of representatives from each political party required~~
15 ~~by law to hold a primary]; and~~

16 (2) three ~~[two]~~ members of a political party required
17 by law to hold a primary that is not the political party of the
18 governor, ~~[different political parties]~~ appointed by the governor
19 ~~[from a list of at least 10 names submitted by the members of the~~
20 ~~senate from each political party required by law to hold a primary,~~

21 ~~[(3) two members of different political parties~~
22 ~~appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives from a list~~
23 ~~of at least 10 names submitted by the members of the house from each~~
24 ~~political party required by law to hold a primary, and~~

1 ~~[(4) two members of different political parties~~
2 ~~appointed by the lieutenant governor from a list of at least 10~~
3 ~~names submitted by the members of the senate from each political~~
4 ~~party required by law to hold a primary].~~

5 (b) ~~[The governor may reject all names on any list submitted~~
6 ~~under Subsection (a)(1) or (2) of this section and require a new~~
7 ~~list to be submitted.]~~ The position of presiding officer of the
8 commission shall rotate biennially among the members of the
9 commission who are from the same political party as the governor
10 ~~[shall elect annually the chairman of the commission].~~

11 (c) Commission ~~[With the exception of the initial~~
12 ~~appointees, commission]~~ members serve for staggered six-year
13 ~~[four-year]~~ terms. ~~[Each appointing official will make one initial~~
14 ~~appointment for a two-year term and one initial appointment for a~~
15 ~~four-year term.]~~ A vacancy on the commission shall be filled for
16 the unexpired portion of the term in the same manner as the original
17 appointment. A member who has served for one term and any part of a
18 second term is not eligible for reappointment.

19 (c-1) The purpose and mission of the Texas Ethics Commission
20 is to achieve the following objectives:

21 (1) controlling and reducing the cost of elections;
22 (2) eliminating opportunities for undue influence
23 over elections and governmental actions;

24 (3) promoting the full disclosure of information
25 related to expenditures and contributions for elections and for
26 petitioning the government;

27 (4) enhancing the potential for individual

1 participation in electoral and governmental processes; and
2 (5) ensuring the confidence and trust of the public in
3 the government of the state.

4 SECTION 2. The following temporary provision is added to
5 the Texas Constitution:

6 TEMPORARY PROVISION. (a) This temporary provision applies to
7 the constitutional amendment proposed by the 84th Legislature,
8 Regular Session, 2015, to change the number, method of appointment,
9 and terms of members of the Texas Ethics Commission and providing
10 for the governance, purpose, and mission of the commission.

11 (b) On January 1, 2016, the terms of all of the members of
12 the Texas Ethics Commission expire, and the governor shall appoint
13 two persons to terms expiring February 1, 2017, two persons to terms
14 expiring February 1, 2019, and two persons to terms expiring
15 February 1, 2021. Thereafter, members of the Texas Ethics
16 Commission serve six-year terms, as provided by Section 24a(c),
17 Article III, of this constitution.

18 (c) This temporary provision expires January 1, 2017.

19 SECTION 3. This proposed constitutional amendment shall be
20 submitted to the voters at an election to be held November 3, 2015.
21 The ballot shall be printed to provide for voting for or against the
22 proposition: "The constitutional amendment providing for a
23 decrease in the size of the Texas Ethics Commission from eight to
24 six members who are appointed by the governor to serve six-year
25 terms, providing for the rotation of the position of presiding
26 officer of the commission, and providing for the purpose and
27 mission of the commission."