# STATE OF RHODE ISLAND 

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY
JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

## J OINT RESOLUTION

TO APPROVE AND PUBLISH AND TO SUBMIT TO THE ELECTORS A PROPOSITION OF AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION -- ETHICS COMMISSION

Introduced By: Representatives Mattiello, DeSimone, Serpa, Shekarchi, and Canario
Date Introduced: May 10, 2016
Referred To: House Judiciary

RESOLVED, That a majority of all members elected to each house of the general assembly voting therefor, the following amendment to the constitution of the state be proposed to qualified electors of the state in accordance with the provisions of Article XIV of the Constitution for their approval and the following Articles are hereby amended, as hereinafter set forth, effective on January 3, 2017, to read as follows:

## ARTICLE III

## OF QUALIFICATION OF OFFICE

Section 8. Ethics commission -- Code of ethics. -- The general assembly shall establish an independent non-partisan ethics commission which shall adopt a code of ethics including, but not limited to, provisions on conflicts of interest, confidential information, use of position, contracts with government agencies and financial disclosure. The assent of two-thirds (2/3) of the members appointed shall be required for the adoption for every rule or regulation. All elected and appointed officials and employees of state and local government, of boards, commissions and agencies shall be subject to the code of ethics. The ethics commission shall have the authority to investigate alleged violations of the code of ethics, including acts otherwise protected by Article VI, Section 5, and to impose penalties, as provided by law $\div$. The ethics commission shall not accept nor initiate any complaints alleging a violation of the code of ethics by a candidate or candidate committee beginning on the first day of declarations of candidacy for the office sought by the candidate, and ending the day after the election for that office during the same year. Any
sanction issued against any party by the ethics commission shall be appealable to the judicial branch as provided by law. and the The commission shall have the power to remove from office officials who are not otherwise subject to impeachment, or expulsion as provided by Article VI, Section 7.

## ARTICLE VI

## OF LEGISLATIVE POWER

Section 5. Immunities of general assembly members. -- The persons of all members of the general assembly shall be exempt from arrest and their estates from attachment in any civil action, during the session of the general assembly, and two days before the commencement and two days after the termination thereof, and all process served contrary hereto shall be void. For any speech in debate in either house, no member shall be questioned in any other place, except by the ethics commission as set forth in Article III, Section 8.

RESOLVED, That this proposition of amendment shall be submitted to the electors for their approval or rejection at the next statewide general election. The voting places in the several cities and towns shall be kept open during the hours required by law for voting therein for general officers of the state; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State shall cause this proposition of amendment to be published as part of this resolution in the newspapers of the state prior to the date of the meetings of the electors; and this proposition shall be inserted in the warrants and notices to be issued previous to those meetings of the electors for the purpose of warning the town, ward, or district meetings, and this proposition shall be read by the town, ward, or district meetings to be held as aforesaid; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the town, ward, and district meetings to be held aforesaid shall be warned, and the list of voters shall be canvassed and made up, and the town, ward, and district meetings shall be conducted in the same manner as now provided by law for the town, ward, and district meetings for the election of general officers of the state.

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