

LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES

As approved by the State Board January 2017

Terms for legislators in both houses should be 4 years and they should be staggered. Outside income of legislators may be limited, preferably using the federal model of a percentage of base income. Stipends, commonly known as lulus, should continue for committee chairs and leadership positions. Legislators should disclose all financial holdings and sources of income, including all clients and services if the matter involves business before the state whether or not the legislator personally performed services or referred the client.

Members of the state legislature should have a greater impact on legislative proceedings. There should be restrictions on how long a legislator is allowed to serve in any leadership position in both the Senate and the Assembly but not a lifetime ban. Committee chairs should have a restricted tenure but could take on a different committee leadership or be reappointed after a specified period of time.

Legislative staff should be full-time professionals, independent of partisan control, and more equitably distributed among freshmen and more senior members, majority and minority, Senate and Assembly. Information about staff salaries and assignments should be publicly available.

A variety of approaches is needed to reduce the number of bills submitted each year: reducing the number of “home rule” bills on which the legislature must act, consolidating or eliminating individual sponsorship of bills, and requiring active support by sponsors for their own bills.

Lobbying regulation should require reporting by all groups and agents who expend significant funds for lobbying. Sufficient resources as well as strong investigatory and enforcement powers should be provided to the agency or agencies enforcing lobbying and ethics rules. All disclosure filings should be timely, electronic and available to the public in easily accessible form on the Internet as well as in downloadable form.