



March 21, 2007

H.R. 1130 - Judicial Disclosure Responsibility Act

Floor Situation

H.R. 1130 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative John Conyers (D-MI) on February 16, 2007. The bill was reported by the House Committee on the Judiciary by voice vote on February 28, 2007.

H.R. 1130 is expected to be considered on the floor on March 21, 2007.

Summary

H.R. 1130 revives and extends until 2009 an expired exemption for the Judicial Conference (federal judges, judicial officers, and judicial employees) that permits redactions of sensitive personal information that could compromise their safety from inclusion in public financial disclosure reports.

H.R. 1130 expands the exemption to permit redactions of sensitive personal information that could compromise the safety of family members of members of the Judicial Conference.

H.R. 1130 expands the required information that must be submitted to Congress detailing any redactions to include:

- the nature or type of information redacted;
- what steps or procedures are in place to ensure that sufficient information is available to litigants to determine if there is a conflict of interest;
- principles used to guide the implementation of redaction authority; and,
- any public complaints received related to redaction.

Background

H.R. 1130 revives a provision of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 that last expired in December of 2005.

The Ethics in Government Act of 1978 applies to all branches of government and sets public financial disclosure requirements for senior level federal officials, including: The President, Vice President, the Judicial Conference, Members of Congress, and certain

senior congressional staff. The Act is designed to prevent the improper use of knowledge gained while employed by the federal government by setting rules of conduct for federal employees.

The financial disclosure reports are made public and can contain such sensitive personal information as residences, spouse's workplace, and children's school locations. Trial judges have been the targets of violence that has resulted in the deaths of at least 4 U.S. judges from 1979-2005.

Cost

The Congressional Budget Office estimated that H.R. 1130 would have no significant impact on the federal budget, direct spending, or revenues.

Staff Contact

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