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House Committee on Elections and Ethics
Anderson House Office Building
124 North Capitol Avenue
Lansing, MI 48933

To the House Elections and Ethics Committee:

I support House Joint Resolution D. However, I ask you to make a few modifications before sending this amendment to the voters.

As currently written, the joint resolution would allow either chamber to "suspend part or all of the salary and expense allowances of a member who acts unethically or is excessively absent from regular session." This is an important reform; however, as is currently written, HJR D does not define what constitutes "act[ing] unethically" for purposes of this section. Do you envision giving each chamber sole discretion to determine when a member "acts unethically"? Furthermore, at what point does a member become "excessively absent"? You may wish to specify a certain number of consecutive session days missed.

Speaking of absences, HJR D should also require that certain absences be excused - for example, if a lawmaker is absent due to medical reasons or military obligations.

Finally, I'm glad to see language in HJR D requiring roll call votes on immediate effect. This reform is long overdue, and I'm hopeful that this will remove any doubt that a motion for immediate effect has reached the 2/3 threshold.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Scott Urbanowski