

1.1 A bill for an act  
1.2 relating to ethics in government; providing that acceptance of large campaign  
1.3 contributions by certain elected officials creates a conflict of interest on issues  
1.4 related to the contributor; imposing a penalty; proposing coding for new law in  
1.5 Minnesota Statutes, chapter 471.

1.6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.7 Section 1. **[471.865] CONFLICTS BASED ON CONTRIBUTIONS.**

1.8 Subdivision 1. **Conflict created.** If an elected official of a county, city, or school  
1.9 district, or the official's campaign committee as defined in section 211A.01, subdivision 4,  
1.10 accepts a contribution as defined in section 211A.01, subdivision 5, of more than \$100,  
1.11 during the official's current term of office or within one year before the current term of  
1.12 office, from an individual or association or an agent of an individual or association, the  
1.13 elected official has a conflict of interest with regard to an action or decision on any question  
1.14 coming before the official in which the official is aware that the contributing individual or  
1.15 association has a financial interest that is of greater consequence to the contributor than  
1.16 the general interest of all residents or taxpayers of the elected official's governmental unit.

1.17 Subd. 2. **Disclosure of conflict.** If a conflict of interest arises under this section, the  
1.18 elected official must prepare a written statement describing the matter requiring action or  
1.19 decision and the amount of the contribution, and deliver a copy of the statement to the  
1.20 presiding officer of the governing body. If a conflict of interest presents itself and there is  
1.21 insufficient time to prepare a written statement, the elected official must orally inform the  
1.22 governing body or committee of the governing body of the conflict. The oral statement  
1.23 must be described in the minutes of the meeting.

1.24 Subd. 3. **Required actions.** After disclosing the conflict of interest, the elected  
1.25 official must abstain from participating in the action or decision, except as provided in

2.1 this subdivision. If the elected official is the county attorney or county sheriff, the elected  
2.2 official must assign the action or decision to a subordinate. If the elected official is a  
2.3 member of the governing body, the official must not chair a meeting or offer a motion or  
2.4 discussion on the question giving rise to the conflict of interest. The official must not vote  
2.5 on the question unless abstention would prevent the body from obtaining a quorum.

2.6 Subd. 4. **Penalty.** An individual who knowingly violates this section is guilty  
2.7 of a petty misdemeanor.