

Committee on Ethics and Elections

CS/HB 7021 — Financial Disclosure

by State Affairs Committee; Public Integrity and Ethics Committee; and Rep. Altman (CS/CS/SB 7040 by Appropriations Committee; Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee; and Ethics and Elections Committee)

The bill revises the administration of the submission of information relating to the disclosures of financial interests and statements of financial interests.

The bill requires the Commission on Ethics to procure and test an electronic filing system by January 1, 2022. The system must:

- Provide access through the internet for the completion and submission of disclosures of financial interests (CE Form 6) and statements of financial interests (CE Form 1);
- Allow for a procedure to make filings available in a format that is accessible by an individual using standard internet-browsing software;
- Issue a verification or receipt that the Commission on Ethics has received the submitted disclosure or statement;
- Provide security that prevents unauthorized access to the electronic filing system's functions or data; and
- Provide a method for an attorney or a certified public accountant to complete the disclosure or statement and certify that he or she prepared it in accordance with s. 112.3144, F.S., or s. 112.3145, F.S., and that the information on the disclosure or statement is true and correct.

The bill requires electronic submission of CE Form 6 beginning January 1, 2022, and CE Form 1 beginning January 1, 2023. The Commission on Ethics must provide notice and other communications to filers by email message and is required to provide notice to filers that any information entered electronically will be publicly released. A filer may no longer include a federal income tax return, or copy thereof, in a filing to the Commission. All disclosures (CE Form 1 and CE Form 6) must be for the calendar year rather than for either the calendar year or the taxable year. Beginning with required electronic submission of CE Form 1, filers must use the dollar value threshold method of reporting (rather than the comparative or percentage threshold).

The bill has an estimated fiscal impact of \$2.2 to \$5 million over three to four fiscal years, due to system upgrades to accommodate for electronic filings. The fiscal impact of this bill can be absorbed within existing resources.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions, except for Section 2, which becomes effective January 1, 2020, take effect upon becoming law.

Vote: Senate 37-0; House 117-0