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LOCAL LAW TO BE ENACTED BY
THE ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE
IN THE
COUNTY OF ERIE

LOCAL LAW INTRO. – NO. 5-1 - 2016

LOCAL LAW – NO. _____ - 2016

A Local Law Increasing Governmental Transparency

Section 1: Intent

It is the intent of this body to increase transparency related to ethical obligations of elected officials across Erie County. This local law hereby increases the disclosure requirements on elected officials to include nepotism and work with lobbyists.

It is the belief of this body that by requiring the publication of this information the practice of nepotism will be dissuaded and the influence of lobbyists diminished.

Section 2: Erie County Local Law number ten of nineteen hundred eighty-nine, as amended by Local Law number four of nineteen hundred ninety four, constituting the Erie County Code of Ethics, is hereby amended as follows:

Section 5. Disclosure of Interest in County Business shall be amended to read as follows:

a) Any elected official, officer or employee or political party official, as defined in this local law, who has, or later acquires an interest, direct or indirect, in any actual or proposed contract with the county, shall publicly disclose the nature and extend of such interest in writing to the clerk of the county legislature as soon as he has knowledge of such actual or prospective interest. Such written disclosure shall be time stamped by the clerk and received as an official record of the legislature of such body.
b) When a member of the Erie County Legislature must take official action on a matter in which he has a substantial personal economic interest distinct from that of the general community or a substantial class of the general community or his constituents, he should consider divesting himself of the interest, if he can do so without undue hardship. His decision in that regard shall be conclusive. Regardless of whether he divests himself of such interest, he shall disclose it in a concise written statement to the clerk of the legislature, who shall time stamp and receive such statement as an official record of the legislature, provided that divestment of such an interest need not be reported if more than one year has passes since such divestment. If he does not divest himself of that interest, he must abstain from participation in such action.
c) <u>All elected county officials shall submit to the clerk of the legislature a list of all family members employed by any governmental organization in any capacity. For the purposes of this section family members shall be defined as members of one's immediate family, parents,</u>

siblings, first cousins, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and in-laws that would otherwise fall into one of the stated categories were they related by blood.

d) The County Executive shall publish a list of all governmental employees who are also officers of a political committee, subcommittee, or hold a chairmanship for a political party, or are an immediate family member of an officer of a political committee, subcommittee, or hold a chairmanship for a political party. Nothing in this section shall be meant to prohibit the appointment or hiring of a person required to be disclosed under this section.

Section 3: add the following section to Erie County Local Law number ten of nineteen hundred eighty-nine, as amended by Local Law number four of nineteen hundred ninety four, constituting the Erie County Code of Ethics:

Section 6: Disclosure of activity related to lobbyist firms

Any meeting, employment, contractual obligation, or consulting work done, by any elected official within Erie County, with or on behalf of any registered lobbyist group shall be disclosed. For the purposes of this section "meetings" shall be deemed to mean any public or private presentations made by the registered lobbyist for the benefit or education of the elected official. "Employment, contractual obligation, or consulting work" shall include any obligation that results in any payment to the elected official. Disclosure of lobbyist related activity shall be updated at the same time the financial disclosure form is required to be submitted pursuant to this law.

Section 4: Severability

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, section or article of this chapter shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such determination shall not affect, impair or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, section or article thereof directly involved in the proceeding in which such adjudication shall have been rendered.

Section 5: Effective Date

This law becomes effective upon its filing with the Secretary of State.

Sponsor: Legislator Lorigo

[ ] bracketed material is deleted; underlined material is to be added