



*Cultivating a Culture of Transparency*

## **A Statement in Support of Revolving Door Provisions for Public Officials**

January 28, 2014

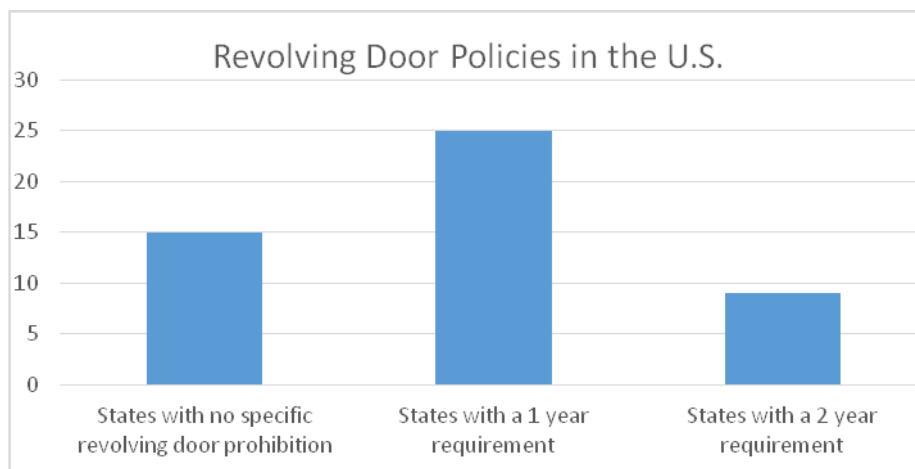
Campaign for Vermont is dedicated to cultivating a culture of transparency. We believe that the people of Vermont deserve the best from those they elect.

When public officials leave office, they become the target of corporations and special interest groups for lobbying, this helps to advance the interests of special interests, but rarely the interests of the public. Campaign for Vermont believes that public officials must be 2 years removed from public office before working in positions intended to directly influence the outcome of decisions and deliberations within government.

The State Integrity Investigation - a joint project between the Center for Public Integrity, Global Integrity, and Public Radio International - gave Vermont ratings of D- and F for executive and legislative accountability respectively.

These rankings can be generally broken up into four categories: Lack of asset disclosure laws, lack of revolving door regulation, lack of nepotism and patronage laws and other conflict of interest measures.

Most states put at least a one year moratorium on lobbying or consulting for parties to a state contract. **Thirty-four states have specific revolving door policies.**<sup>1</sup> Vermont has no laws regulating this activity.



CFV Ethics Chart - <http://ow.ly/saHsI>

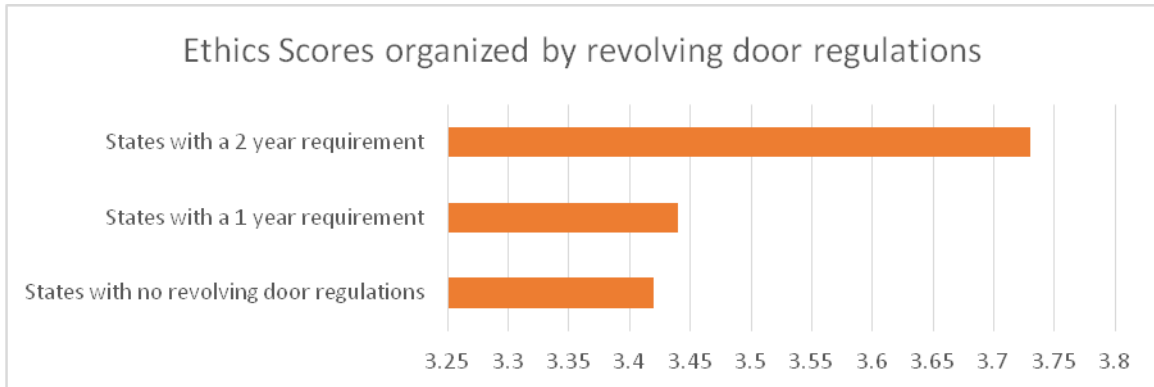
<sup>1</sup> CFV Ethics chart - <http://ow.ly/saHsI>

To illustrate how Vermont compares to other states, below is a comparison in conflict of interest laws between Vermont and Rhode Island. The State Integrity Investigation compiled a report card on legislative accountability that can be viewed here: <http://bit.ly/1d0GyWU>.



State Integrity Investigation - [http://www.stateintegrity.org/comparison\\_widget](http://www.stateintegrity.org/comparison_widget)

This chart was compiled using data from an NY Times survey evaluating confidence in the ethical behavior of state officials. It represents how states with a 2 year requirement for revolving door regulations tend to have a higher confidence in state government.



CFV Ethics Chart - <http://ow.ly/saHsl>

### Recommendations for Vermont Legislation:

Campaign for Vermont advocates joining 47 other states who have taken steps to protect public trust and hold elected officials to the highest ethical standards. We propose that a strict code of ethics be established which includes the following elements: a clearly defined method for dealing with potential conflicts of interest; full financial disclosure for statewide public officials; shared gift disclosure requirements; restrictions on nepotism and patronage; closing the revolving door in

our political system; and the establishment of an independent commission to deal with ethics, transparency, and accountability.

Revolving door legislation should include the creation of an independent commission. A nine member commission – three appointed by news associations, three appointed by the governor, and three appointed public non-profits groups.

Campaign for Vermont supports legislation that would place a 2-year prohibition public officials acting as lobbyists, being a party to a state contract, or employed by an entity they've been responsible for regulating. Other states who have a 2-year requirement - Alabama, Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Montana, New York, and Oklahoma

We believe the penalties should be sufficient to act as a deterrent, but also be meaningful if a violation should occur. Enforcement actions should originate the independent commission.

Campaign for Vermont believes revolving door legislation is just one step to a more accountable and more efficient state government. Campaign of Vermont is focused on cultivating a culture of transparency and accountability across all of state government.