



**REPRESENTATIVE JAMES E. VALLEE  
MAJORITY LEADER**

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**VALLEE ADVOCATES FOR ETHICS OVERHAUL IN THE LEGISLATURE**

*Comprehensive reform bill receives public hearing from House and Senate Committees on Ethics*

BOSTON— Representative James E. Vallee (D-Franklin), Majority Leader of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, recently made clear his staunch support of meaningful ethics reform in the legislature at a public hearing held jointly by the Committees on Ethics and the Committees on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight.

The Committee on Ethics, of which Vallee is a member, on Wednesday joined the Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight for a public hearing on several bills, namely Governor Patrick's sweeping proposal to enforce clearer, more comprehensive ethics and lobbying laws.

"It is imperative that we as a legislature move swiftly to enact an ethics reform package," said Vallee. "Passage of this bill can be an impetus to restoring the public trust in government that has, unfortunately, been eroded in many of our constituents."

House bill 95, which calls for overall stricter guidelines on who qualifies as a lobbyist and improved public access to such information, also includes proposals first filed by Vallee in the 2007-2008 legislative session.

Vallee's contributions to the bill include a recommendation that all state, county, and municipal employees receive a summary of the conflict of interest law within 30 days of becoming an employee and every year thereafter, and an increased penalty for breaching the conflict of interest law, raising the fines from as low as \$3000 to up to \$25,000, dependent upon the violation; these provisions are aimed at reinforcing the integrity of public employees.

"Representative Vallee has been in the forefront of ethics reform for years," said Peter Sturges, a former Executive Director of the State Ethics Commission and a member of the Governor's

ethics task force that drafted the final legislation. “His commitment to bringing meaningful ethics reform to government is evident in his vocal support for House bill 95 and his sponsorship of several strong ethics bills that he filed in previous sessions.”

“We appreciate Representative Vallee’s leadership on these issues,” said Pamela Wilmot, Executive Director of Common Cause Massachusetts and a member of the Governor’s ethics task force. “By passing this bill in a timely manner, the legislature can reassure the public that unethical behavior is unacceptable and will be promptly and appropriately punished.”

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