



**REPRESENTATIVE JAMES E. VALLEE
MAJORITY LEADER**

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VALLEE APPOINTED TO CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON ETHICS REFORM

Will serve as leading House advocate on bi-partisan committee

BOSTON – Speaker Robert A. DeLeo has appointed his chief advocate and drafter of the stringent, far-reaching ethics and lobbying reform bill recently passed by the House and strongly applauded by government reform advocates—Representative James E. Vallee (D- Franklin), Majority Leader—as the principal House member of the legislative conference committee on ethics reform.

The conference committee, consisting of three House members and three Senate members, is charged with resolving the differences between each chamber’s versions of ethics reform legislation.

“I am honored to be part of crafting such an important piece of legislation,” said Vallee. “Only when the citizens of Massachusetts see their legislators making bold moves to change the public perception will we prove that we are acting with nothing but the public interest at heart. I look forward to working with my House and Senate colleagues to negotiate a bill that will represent the strongest, most comprehensive, and meaningful overhaul of the way our government does business.”

"We were pleased when we heard that Rep. Vallee would be a conferee on the ethics bill, because he has been one of the strongest advocates in the legislature for real reform in this area," said Pamela Wilmot, Executive Director of Common Cause Massachusetts and a member of Governor Patrick’s ethics task force.

“This reform is a top priority for me and for the Massachusetts Legislature,” said Vallee. “Without it, the meaningful work we do to improve our transportation system and restructure the state pension system—some of the important issues that we are addressing this session—will not have as strong an impact on our constituents.”

The House ethics reform bill, 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. Some of Vallee's original contributions to the House 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.

Along with Vallee, the House conferees are Democrat Peter Kocot, Chairman of the House Committee on Ethics; and Republican Jeffrey Perry. The Senate members are Democrat Frederick Berry, Senate Majority Leader; Democrat Brian Joyce, and Republican Bruce Tarr.

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