

# Amending the Ethics Law to Retain Quality Local Government Employees SB177 by Sen. Gudger

Under Alabama's Ethics Law, public employees cannot leave a job and then represent their new employer in front of their former employer until after two years have passed. Known as the "revolving door," this provision in the Ethics Law is intended to prohibit former public officials or employees from using their influence to benefit a private company before their former employer.

Unfortunately, this provision also applies to, for example, public employees who leave their job with a county to accept employment with a city. In such a circumstance, the new city employee could not appear before the county commission to make requests on behalf of the city.

In March 2019, the Code of Ethics Clarification and Reform Commission examined this twist in the current law and reported that the revolving door portions of the law were not designed to restrict public employees from going to work with other public employers or from returning to work with their original employer. The report submitted to the Legislature recommended that the "revolving door" provisions be altered to make a distinction between former public employees who go to work for other public entities.

**This bill does not propose a comprehensive revision to the Alabama Ethics Law but proposes only:**

- Amending the revolving door provision to allow public employees to be rehired by former public employers without being required to wait two years;
- Amending the revolving door provision to allow former public employees hired by another public employer to represent that new entity before their former employer without being required to wait two years.

**If enacted, this vital piece of legislation would provide counties the ability to attract and retain qualified and experienced employees.**

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