

CONNECTICUT STATE ETHICS COMMISSION  
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ADVISORY OPINION NUMBER 78-29

Member of the General Assembly as Counsel  
for a Municipal Housing Authority

A member of the General Assembly, who is an attorney, has asked the State Ethics Commission whether he may be retained as counsel for a municipal housing authority.

Municipal housing authorities are created by section 8-40, Connecticut General Statutes. The powers and duties which are, or may be, held by or assigned to a municipal housing authority are found throughout Title 8, particularly in chapter 128, of the Connecticut General Statutes. In addition to its activities within a municipality's boundaries, a housing authority is likely to consult or do business with such State agencies as the Department of Community Affairs, the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority, and the State Bond Commission.

A State legislator is a public official. Section 1(j), Public Act Number 77-600. There is nothing in the Code of Ethics for Public Officials, Public Act Number 77-600, which specifically prohibits a public official from being counsel for a municipal housing authority. A review of section 6 of the Code, section 1-66, Connecticut General Statutes, as amended, reveals no provisions with which a counsel for a municipal housing authority could not comply. There appear to be no inherent conflicts of interest between employment as counsel and proper discharge of the legislator's duties as a member of the General Assembly. See State ex rel. Schenck v. Barrett, 121 Conn. 237 (1936); Annot., Incompatibility, under common-law doctrine, of office of state legislator and position or post in local political subdivision, 89 ALR 2d 632 (1963).

Nothing under the jurisdiction of the State Ethics Commission, therefore, would prevent a member of the General Assembly from accepting a position as counsel of a municipal housing authority.

By order of the Commission,

Handwritten signature of Thomas J. Lynch in cursive script.

Rev. Thomas J. Lynch  
Chairman

Dated December 7, 1978

