

Advisory Opinion Issued on December 20, 2007

A September 2007 advisory opinion of the Ethics Commission – that a member of the Ethics Commission did not have a conflict of interest with continuing on the Commission while associating professionally with the law firm of the Counsel to the Commission -- is reaffirmed, and a request for reconsideration of that opinion is denied. That opinion addressed the conflict question in the context of whether the member's votes on the Commission might be, or appear to be, unduly influenced by the legal advice provided by Counsel to the Commission. Although not specifically citing the provision in the Queen Anne's County Public Ethics Law relevant to that concern, the substance and rationale of the opinion reflects that the Commission focused on Section 8-11.A.(7). The request for reconsideration, however, focused on different considerations, contained in Section 8-11.A.(2). As such, the request actually was for an expansion of the earlier opinion, rather than a reconsideration of it. In light of the member's subsequent resignation from the Commission, an expanded opinion to address this different consideration is moot.