

ADVISORY OPINION NO. 2001-25

Issued On July 12, 2001 By The

WEST VIRGINIA ETHICS COMMISSION

OPINION SOUGHT

A **County Board of Education** asks whether it may spend school funds to pay Chamber of Commerce dues and to purchase tickets for Chamber luncheons and dinners.

FACTS RELIED UPON BY THE COMMISSION

The Board of Education is interested in membership in the local Chamber of Commerce and asks whether it may become a dues paying member. The Board believes that membership in the Chamber will help it promote educational and employment opportunities for its students.

The Board views the Chamber's monthly luncheon meetings as an opportunity to meet with members of the business community and to discuss and advance school issues of local interest.

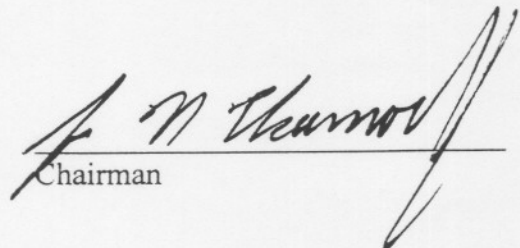
CODE PROVISIONS RELIED UPON BY COMMISSION

WV Code § 6B-2-5 (b) provides that a "public official or public employee may not knowingly and intentionally use his or her office or the prestige of his or her office for his or her own private gain or that of another person."

ADVISORY OPINION

The Ethics Commission finds that it would not be a violation for the Board of Education to use school funds to pay for its membership in the local Chamber of Commerce.

The Ethics Commission finds that the use of school funds to buy meal tickets for the Board or other school personnel to attend Chamber luncheons and dinners would be a prohibited use of office for their own private gain.


Chairman