

June 16, 1999
Re: IO-99-110

This letter is a follow-up to our conversation earlier today when you inquired whether you could accept a gift of a ticket to a golf outing political fund raiser for a state senator. The donor of the gift is a long-time personal friend, who also owns a deli business in Anne Arundel County.

Since you have advised me that your friend does no business with Anne Arundel County government, he would not appear to be a "controlled donor", that is a person from whom the acceptance of gifts is controlled and limited. For that reason, and because the gift appears to be wholly personal in nature, you may accept the gift.

However, you should bear in mind that you are attending this fund raiser as a private citizen and you should not be introduced as the county police chief. I realize that introductions at a fund raiser are not necessarily subject to your control, but you may not respond to such an introduction by offering any comments or participating in any other ceremonial function, in an official capacity. To do so could raise issues under §3-104 of the Public Ethics Law, involving the use of the prestige of office for the gain of another.

For your information, I am enclosing a copy of "Guidelines: Gifts and the County Employee". It may be helpful to you, but you should also feel free to call the ethics commission at any time.

Thank you for your inquiry.

Sincerely,

Betsy K. Dawson