

January 27, 1999
Re: IO-99-19

You inquired whether there is a conflict of interest between your county position and your ownership of property that is being purchased in part by the county for an easement in connection with a capital project. The short answer is no. Your interest in this property would only present issues under the ethics law if the county's procedures for acquiring land involved the county council, by whom you are employed, or if the capital project in which your property is included were presented to the county council during your employer's term for additional appropriations or other changes. Even then, the possibility of a conflict of interest would be remote as to --. Since presumably, the county's purchase of a portion of your property is a very minor part of the overall cost of this project, and since the council member by whom you are employed does not have any interest in this property, it is unlikely that he would even have to recuse from participation in this capital project budget item. Obviously, it would be inappropriate for you to assist -- in any matter involving this project, but in my opinion, that is the only foreseeable area of conflict.

Thank you for your inquiry. If you have additional questions, please call any time.

Sincerely,

Betsy K. Dawson
Executive Director