

August 27, 2001  
Re: IO-01-125

You inquired on behalf of a council member, whether that member could recommend the appointment of a member of the Democratic Central Committee to the Salary Standards Commission. The ethics commission previously determined that a member of the Salary Standards Commission would be subject to the county's Public Ethics Law under §1-101(f)(1). See, IO-97-79. The ethics law does not generally regulate the political activity of county employees, which is protected under the state law, Article 24, §13-103, Annotated Code of Maryland (1957, as amended.) Under that provision, a county employee may participate fully in political activity, as long as the activity does not occur on the job or during working hours, and as long as the employee does not advocate the overthrow of the government by unconstitutional or violent means. See §13-105.

Therefore, there is nothing in the county's ethics law that would prohibit the appointment of a member of the Democratic Central Committee to the Salary Standards Commission.

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

Sincerely,

Betsy K. Dawson  
Executive Director