



**JUDICIAL INVESTIGATION COMMISSION**

Post Office Box 1629  
Charleston, West Virginia 25326-1629  
(304) 558-0169 • FAX (304) 558-0831

September 18, 2001

Re: JIC Advisory Opinion 2001-16

Dear :

In a recent correspondence to the Judicial Investigation Commission you asked for any opinion regarding the appropriateness of you riding in a vehicle with your name and title on the vehicle in a parade and introducing yourself as a family law master. The Commission has reviewed your request for an advisory opinion.

To address the question which you have raised the Commission reviewed Canon 4 of the Code of Judicial Conduct which states in relevant part:

Canon 4. A judge shall so conduct the judge's extra-judicial activities as to minimize the risk of conflict with judicial obligations.

A. Extra-judicial activities in general. - A judge shall conduct all of the judge's extra-judicial activities so that they do not:

- (1) cast reasonable doubt on the judge's capacity to act impartially as a judge;
- (2) demean the judicial office; or
- (3) interfere with the proper performance of judicial duties.

Commentary - Complete separation of a judge from extra-judicial activities is neither possible nor wise; a judge should not become isolated from the community in which the judge lives.

Based upon the facts as you have presented them, and the language contained in the relevant section of Canon 4, you may ride in a vehicle with your name and title on the vehicle in a parade and introduce yourself as a \_\_\_\_\_ so long as you did so within the confines

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of the relevant sections of Canon 4 cited above. It is hoped that this opinion fully addresses the issue which you have raised. If you have any further question regarding this matter do not hesitate to contact the Commission.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Donald H. Cookman", followed by a horizontal line.

Donald H. Cookman, Chairperson  
Judicial Investigation Commission

DHC:nb