

Advisory Opinion 2008-1

Please Note: For clarity, references to and excerpts from provisions of statutes or the Ethics Guidelines have been updated to conform to subsequent changes in numbering and language, where the changes have not affected the substance of the Opinion.

February 15, 2008

Honorable Robert J. L'Heureux
94 Back River Road
Merrimack NH 03054

Dear Representative L'Heureux,

The Legislative Ethics Committee, at its meeting on February 5, 2008, reviewed your request for an advisory opinion in your letter dated January 30, 2008. The question you presented is whether it is permissible for you to accept 2 complimentary tickets to attend a fundraising banquet of the New Hampshire Chapter of the Safari Club International. According to information you provided, the tickets are valued at \$55.00 per person or \$100 per couple.

New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated (RSA) 14-C prohibits an elected official from knowingly accepting a gift valued at greater than \$50 unless the item falls under one of the exceptions set forth in the chapter. After careful review, the Committee found no exception that would apply to the 2 complimentary tickets which are valued at \$100. Therefore, the Committee concluded that it would constitute a prohibited gift.

You also inquired whether it would be permissible for you to accept a free 1-year membership to Safari Club International. If the membership's value is greater than \$50, this would also constitute a prohibited gift, as the Committee could find no exception that would allow it.

Please contact me if I can answer any further questions about this matter.

Very truly yours,
Russell F. Hilliard
Chairman

cc: Members of the Legislative Ethics Committee