



Supreme Court

STATE OF LOUISIANA
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JOHN A. DIXON, JR.
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WALTER F. MARCUS, JR.
JAMES L. DENNIS

JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATOR
EUGENE J. MURRET

November 21, 1978

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE JUDICIARY COMMISSION OF LOUISIANA:

Gentlemen:

Your request to the Supreme Court Committee on Judicial Ethics for an advisory opinion on the question of whether a judge may ethically make a political contribution to a candidate for elective office has been carefully considered. Canon 7 of the Code of Judicial Conduct provides that a judge should refrain from political activity inappropriate to his judicial office. Paragraph A thereof provides that a judge should not pay an assessment or make a contribution to a political organization or candidate. Subsection A(2) provides an exception in that a judge holding an office filled by public election between competing candidates may, only insofar as permitted by law, contribute to a political party or organization.

Informal Opinion 1350, American Bar Association Committee on Ethics and Professional Responsibility, October 10, 1975, expresses the view that the canon precludes a judge from making a contribution to a political organization or to any candidate running for election, even for judicial office, except when he himself is that candidate under the circumstances authorized in paragraph A(2) of the canon. See attached copy of opinion.

A majority of the members of the Supreme Court Committee on Judicial Ethics are of the opinion that the Code of Judicial Conduct prohibits a judge or a candidate for judicial office from making a contribution to a candidate for any office, except when he himself is a candidate for election or reelection.

Sincerely,

Eugene J. Murret
Committee Secretary

EJM:mlm
Attachment

cc: Members of the Supreme Court Committee
on Judicial Ethics
Members of the Supreme Court