

## Judicial Inquiry Commission

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The Judicial Inquiry Commission has received your request for an opinion concerning whether judges may submit an article for publication to a non-legal trade association magazine. The article will be an informative article in an edition of the trade magazine dedicated entirely to articles concerning the local judicial process. In addition, the judges have been asked to appear on the cover of the magazine with the president of the organization. No remuneration is involved.

It is the opinion of the Commission that judges may engage in the activities described. Judges may submit articles concerning the judicial process at the request of a local trade association for publication in its local trade magazine and they may appear with the association's president on the cover of the magazine containing the article. This opinion is based primarily on the provisions of Canon 4 of the Alabama Canons of Judicial Ethics.

Canon 4 makes specific provision for judges engaging in activities "to improve the law, the legal system, and the administration of justice" as follows:

A judge, subject to the proper performance of his judicial duties, may engage in the following quasi-judicial activities, if in doing so he does not cast doubt on his capacity to decide impartially any issue that may come before him:

- A. He may speak, write, lecture, teach, and participate in other activities concerning the law, the legal system, and the administration of justice.

The article in the trade magazine is suggested to be an article explaining the legal process in an informative manner. Such would seem to be encouraged by Canon 4 subject to the restriction that the article, "does not cast doubt on his capacity to decide impartially any issue that may come before him." The appearance of the judges on the cover of the magazine along with the association's president appears to fall within this same category so long as the endeavor is not to promote one side of an issue but to present informative articles on the legal process.

Very truly yours,

JUDICIAL INQUIRY COMMISSION