

Meyers, Robert (COE)

INQ 06-120

From: Meyers, Robert (COE)
Sent: Wednesday, August 16, 2006 2:05 PM
To: Escobar, Bernardo (DIST10)
Subject: Ethics Opinion

Hi Bernardo,

This is to confirm that we spoke earlier today and approximately one month ago about whether a conflict of interest exists if you take paid leave from your position as Chief of Staff to Commissioner Javier Souto to work on his re-election campaign. You further stated that you will not be paid by the campaign. The only possible section of the county's Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance that could apply is the "Conflicting Employment" provision. It is a conflict if an employee accepts other employment which would impair his or her independence of judgment in the performance of his or her official duties. In your case, taking leave from your County position to work on the re-election campaign means that you will not be exercising any public duties during this timeframe. Moreover, you aren't actually accepting other employment because you are not going to be paid for your efforts. Therefore, you may work on the campaign while you are on leave from your position with the Commissioner.

If you wish to discuss, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Robert Meyers, Executive Director
Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust
(305) 350-0613