

#2

Harvey J. Myrick III  
523 7<sup>th</sup> Street North  
Columbus, Mississippi 39701  
662-251-6850

Mr. Tom Hood  
Executive Director and Chief Counsel  
Mississippi Ethics Commission  
Post Office Box 22746  
Jackson, Mississippi 39225

Re: ***Ethics in Government Issues with Regard to Service as Board Member of the Columbus Lowndes Convention and Visitor's Bureau***

Dear Mr. Hood:

I am writing as a member of the Columbus Lowndes Convention and Visitor's Bureau (CVB) to request an official opinion from your office about my past service with a non-profit organization that has received funds from the CVB and whether it would be an ethical violation for me, in an official meeting of the CVB to vote to appropriate money from the CVB to that entity and if so, whether recusal would cure any such violation.

The CVB has been in existence in Columbus for several years. However, most recently, in 2011, it was created by Local and Private Legislation. Many years before that another Local and Private bill was passed by the Mississippi Legislature, which legislation authorized the collection of a 2% "tourism" tax from sales at restaurants that met a certain dollar amount of annual sales. The new Local and Private Legislation specifies how the Board of the CVB is appointed. I was appointed only a couple of months ago by the Mayor of the City and the President of the Board of Supervisors.

The Local and Private Legislation specifies that the 2% sales tax revenue is to be used for, among other things, the promotion of tourism and conventions in Lowndes County. I am proud to say that I have been involved in the creation of a non-profit corporation the purpose of which is to raise money for, and promote awareness of the benefits to the community provided by the Columbus Lowndes Humane Society. The corporation, *Mississippi State Cook-Off / "Grilling on the River"* ("Grilling"), raises money, principally through sponsorships, fees and ticket sales for an annual Barbeque cooking competition known as "Grilling on the River."

The event has grown over the years and is now recognized as a major event in the southeast. I was the incorporator and the agent for service of