

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# STATE OF MAINE

Inter-Departmental Memorandum Date February 20, 1975

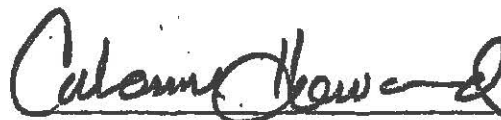
To Bruce Poulton Dept. State Planning Office  
From Cabanne Howard, Asst. Dept. Attorney General  
Subject Conflict of Interest for State Planning Office Employee

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You have asked whether a conflict of interest would exist if an employee of the State Planning Office, Ms. Abbie Page, were to serve as a paid consultant to the Keyes Fibre Company to assist the company in reclaiming newspapers from the towns and cities of the southern and central portions of the State. You have advised us that Ms. Page's duties with the State Planning Office consist primarily of assisting the Regional Planning Commissions of the State in undertaking planning on behalf of their constituent coastal towns for the use of the coastal resources of the state.

It is the opinion of this office that no conflict of interest would arise were Ms. Page to be employed by Keyes Fibre in addition to continuing with the State Planning Office. In reaching this opinion, we are guided by the Supreme Judicial Court's recent statement that "questions concerning whether there is a 'conflict of interest' violative of law are not susceptible of generalized answers. Essentially, each case will be 'law' only unto itself." Answers of the Justices, A.2d., (Me. Jan. 24, 1975) (Slip Opinion at 4). The significant facts on which we base our opinion in Ms. Page's situation are as follows: Her services are first of all provided, not to towns and cities, but to Regional Planning Commissions, while her dealings on behalf of Keyes Fibre will be with municipalities directly. Secondly, even if such services could be regarded as dealing with municipalities, they are limited only to those municipalities on the coast, while the scope of Ms. Page's work for Keyes Fibre would have a different geographical range. But finally, and most importantly, the substance of the planning program which Ms. Page is developing for the coastal Regional Planning Commissions has little or nothing to do with the disposal of newspaper waste. Rather, it is designed to assist the coastal municipalities in identifying and protecting their unique or valuable coastal resources.



CABANNE HOWARD  
Assistant Attorney General