



City of Chicago  
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May 18, 1992

CONFIDENTIAL

[REDACTED]

RE: 92017.Q, Travel

Dear [REDACTED]:

On [REDACTED], 1992, this office received your letter apprising the Board of Ethics of an [REDACTED] Airlines offer to fly you, along with numerous other public officials, to City X [REDACTED] on an [REDACTED] inaugural flight scheduled for [REDACTED], 1992. We are writing to confirm that your acceptance of the offer that was described to us is in compliance with the Governmental Ethics Ordinance.

In addition to the information that you forwarded, [REDACTED] of your office explained that [REDACTED] Airlines has offered to pay your travel and hotel expenses, as well as all meal expenses that are a part of [REDACTED] Airlines official functions. In your [REDACTED] letter, you explained that this trip to City X presents numerous economic and tourism development opportunities for the City of Chicago by enabling you to visit business, civic, and governmental leaders. You have been extended an invitation to meet the Mayor of [REDACTED], the Chairman of the Committee of Finance of [REDACTED] the President of the Economic Development Corporation of [REDACTED], and the Vice President of [REDACTED].

After reviewing the facts presented, the staff has concluded that the Ordinance does not prohibit you from accepting the travel and hosting expenses from [REDACTED] Airlines.

The relevant provisions of the City's Governmental Ethics Ordinance state:

- (b) No person shall give or offer to give to any official, employee, or City contractor, or the spouse or minor child of either of them, and none of them shall accept, anything of value, including, but not limited to, a gift, favor or



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promise of future employment, based upon any mutual understanding, either explicit or implicit, that the votes, official actions, decisions or judgments of any official, employee or City contractor, concerning the business of the City would be influenced thereby. It shall be presumed that a non-monetary gift having a value of less than \$50 does not involve such an understanding.

(c) No person who has an economic interest in a specific City business, service or regulatory transaction shall give, directly or indirectly, to any City official or employee whose decision or action may substantially affect such transaction, or to the spouse or minor child of such official or employee, and none of them shall accept, any gift of (i) cash or its equivalent regardless of value, or (ii) an item or service other than an occasional one of nominal value (less than \$50) provided, however, nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit such person from accepting gifts from relatives.

(d) Except as prohibited in subsections (a) and (b), nothing in this Section 2-156-040 shall prohibit any person from giving or receiving: (i) an award publicly presented in recognition of public service; (ii) commercially reasonable loans made in the ordinary course of the lender's business; (iii) political contributions, provided they are reported to the extent required by law; (iv) reasonable hosting, including travel and expenses, entertainment, meals or refreshments furnished in connection with public events, appearances or ceremonies related to official City business, if furnished by the sponsor of such public event.

§§ 2-156-040 (b), (c) & (d).

Under subsection (b), an official or employee may not accept travel and hosting expenses if they are based upon a mutual understanding, whether implicit or explicit, that the official's or employee's official actions will be influenced thereby. As long as there is no such understanding with [REDACTED] Airlines this section would not prohibit you from accepting these travel and hosting expenses from the Airlines.

Under subsection (c), you, as the [REDACTED] of Chicago [REDACTED], are clearly in a position to substantially affect [REDACTED] Airlines' transactions with the City. However, subsection (d) specifically allows the acceptance of reasonable travel expenses so long as the

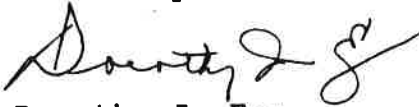
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following prerequisites are met: (1) the expenses are not paid anonymously, (2) the expenses are not paid to influence your actions in your City job, (3) the expenses are reasonable, (4) the expenses are furnished in connection with a public event, appearance, or ceremony that is related to official City business, and (5) the expenses are furnished by the sponsor of the event.

As this travel package has been described to us, the expenses are to be paid by the sponsor of the event, [REDACTED] Airlines, with no attempt to influence your actions in City government. The expenses are reasonable in the sense that they do not exceed what is necessary to achieve the stated purpose of the trip, to promote economic and cultural relations between the City of Chicago and City X. In addition, the costs are being furnished in connection with civic functions in which you have been invited to participate in your capacity as an official representative of the City of Chicago. Therefore, based on previous Board decisions, the staff believes that your acceptance of the invitations from [REDACTED] Airlines is in compliance with the Ethics Ordinance.

We thank you for bringing this matter to our attention and for your willingness to comply with the standards embodied in the Ethics Ordinance. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Dorothy J. Eng  
Executive Director

cc: Kelly Welsh, Corporation Counsel

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