

# *The Supreme Court of Ohio*

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ON GRIEVANCES AND DISCIPLINE

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## **OPINION 87-044**

Issued: October 13, 1987

*[Former CJC Opinion-provides advice under the former Ohio Code of Judicial Conduct which is superseded by the Ohio Code of Judicial Conduct, eff. 3/1/2009.]*

*[Not Current: subsequent rule amendments to Canon 7, Ohio Code of Judicial Conduct]*

**SYLLABUS:** Judges may ethically express their opinion regarding economic and political issues or measures intended to improve the law, the legal system, and the administration of justice.

**OPINION:** We have before us two separate but similar requests for advisory opinions relating to judges endorsing or opposing issues in an upcoming election. The first request concerns a county sales tax which would finance needed improvements to the county jail and courthouse. The second request concerns the merit selection plan for the selection and retention of judges in Ohio.

It is our opinion that judges may ethically endorse or oppose economic or political issues or measures, provided they are intended to improve the law, the legal system, or the administration of justice. Code of Judicial Conduct Canon 7A(4). We believe that both of the aforementioned issues involve attempts to improve the law and the administration of justice. Therefore, whether a judge agrees or disagrees with a local county sales tax or the merit selection plan, he or she may ethically make known his or her opinion regarding these issues.

In conclusion, it is our opinion, and you are so advised that, as a judge, you may ethically express your opinion regarding a county sales tax to finance needed improvements to the county jail and courthouse, the merit selection plan or any other issue pertaining to the improvement of the law, the legal system and the administration of justice.

**This is an informal, non-binding advisory opinion, based upon the facts as presented and limited to questions arising under the Code of Judicial Conduct.**

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