
4/69 Past Bar officers endorsing political candidates

This inquiry concerned the ethical propriety of the conduct of attorneys who were past presidents of the State Bar permitting their names to be listed along with their standing as a past president in endorsing a partisan political candidate for statewide office, because of the possible interpretation by the public that such political endorsements could be construed as an endorsement by the State Bar of Wisconsin.

In accordance with this committee's stated policy in the State Bar Rules of declining to respond to inquiries concerning past or present conduct except from a grievance committee, the committee will not pass upon the conduct in this instance.

However, it is the committee's recommendation that the Board of Governors consider adopting a policy that no lawyer, either alone or with others, shall engage in conduct from which it might reasonably be inferred that the State Bar of Wisconsin, its Board of Governors, or any of its sections or any of its committees favors or endorses any political party or political candidate.

(Note: The Board of Governors adopted the above policy upon recommendation of this committee. It should be clear that such recommendation and policy shall not prevent individual lawyers or groups of attorneys from endorsing and expressing their opinions regarding the qualifications of a judicial or political candidate for office.)