

1981 WL 157939 (S.C.A.G.)

Office of the Attorney General

State of South Carolina

August 27, 1981

**\*1 RE: Requests for personal recommendations**

Capt. J. Leon Gasque  
SLED  
4444 Broad River Road  
Columbia, South Carolina 29221

Dear Capt. Gasque:

You have asked the opinion of this Office whether or not it would be appropriate and lawful for state officers such as Chief Strom and yourself to be the authors of general letters of recommendation or general personal endorsement for private individuals when requested by them. It is the opinion of this Office that any activity in this area beyond the usual responses concerning employment of persons previously employed under your supervision would almost never be appropriate and under certain conditions may be considered unlawful.

We in state government must always be concerned with the appearance which our actions demonstrate as well as whether or not our actions comport precisely with all technical aspects of the statutes. It would seem that any general letter of recommendation or general personal endorsement not addressed specifically over the signature of one well known as a state official would undoubtedly carry with it the imprimatur of the office held by that individual whether or not that was the intent of the office holder.

This being the case, it is our opinion that general letters of personal endorsement or recommendation of individuals should not issue from public officials such as you.

If I may be of any further help to you on this matter, please let me know.

Sincerely yours,

William P. Simpson  
Assistant Attorney General

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