



STATE OF KANSAS

*Office of the Attorney General*

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CURT T. SCHNEIDER  
*Attorney General*

September 9, 1975

ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINION NO. 75-355

Mr. John V. Black  
Pratt County Attorney  
306 South Oak  
Pratt, Kansas 67124

Re: Counties--Officers--Public Funds

Synopsis: The payment of dues for a County Engineer in the Kansas Engineering Society is not an expenditure incurred in the discharge of the official duties of the office, nor is the expenditure related to those official duties, and accordingly, it is not a proper or appropriate expenditure of public funds.

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Dear Mr. Black:

You enclose a copy of a purchase order and dues statement which was rendered to the County Engineer of Pratt County. Inasmuch as these are dues for the Kansas Engineering Society, and not for the Kansas Association of County Engineers or Directors of Public Works, you question whether this is a proper expenditure of public funds.

There is no express statutory authority for such payments. Counties have, of course, long paid dues and assessments for county officers' membership in and affiliation with organizations related to their official duties, such as the various state associations of county officers. These are expenditures in which the county, as a quasi-municipal entity, has a legitimate public interest, the organizations being expressly related to the officers' official duties and positions. However, as you point out, the payment of dues for county officers' membership in various organizations in which they are personally or professionally interested,

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and which organizations are related only to the officers' professional interests apart from his or her official responsibilities, are of a different class. The county has no particular interest, for example, in whether the county attorney is a member of the Kansas Bar Association, or whether the coroner is a member of the Kansas Medical Society.

In short, the dues assessment is not an expenditure which was incurred by the County Engineer in the discharge of his official duties, and membership in the organization is not related to the discharge of those duties, and accordingly, it is my opinion that the payment of such dues statement is not an appropriate or proper expenditure of public funds.

Yours very truly,



CURT T. SCHNEIDER  
Attorney General

CTS:JRM:kj