

1978 WL 207606 (S.C.A.G.)

Office of the Attorney General

State of South Carolina

May 24, 1978

*1 Ms. Jacqueline E. Jacobs, Ph.D.
Executive Director
The South Carolina Wildlife Federation
Suite 211, Dutch Plaza
Columbia, South Carolina 29210

Dear Dr. Jacobs:

You have recently asked the opinion of this Office as to the application of §§ 2-17-10, et seq., Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, as amended, to The South Carolina Wildlife Federation and the Federation's volunteers or staff employees who spend only a slight portion of the organization's time communicating with members of the General Assembly or their staff to influence the passage or defeat of legislation. Additionally, your letter stated that the South Carolina Wildlife Federation was a non-profit educational organization that had no pecuniary interest in and did not benefit monetarily from legislation but rather it acted on behalf of the general public in promoting the wise use of our natural resources and in producing educational programs furthering this end.

Section 2-17-10 through 2-17-70 were adopted by the General Assembly as Act 1140 of 1974 for the express purpose of regulating lobbyists and lobbying. Reading the above sections in general, and § 2-17-20 specifically, it appears that the Act's registration requirements are applicable only to individuals whose principle purpose of employment is to influence members of the General Assembly in "... any legislation affecting the pecuniary interest of any person as distinct from those of the whole people of the State or to act in any manner as legislative counsel or agent in connection with any such legislation ...". Based upon the facts as set forth in your opinion request, this is not the principle purpose of the volunteers and staff of your organization.

Therefore, based on the language of the Act, it is the opinion of this Office that § 2-17-10, et seq., relating to lobbyist and lobbying apply only to those persons not otherwise excepted for whom a principle purpose of their employment is to influence the acts or votes of members of the General Assembly.

Very truly yours,

C. Havird Jones, Jr.
Assistant Attorney General

Approved by:

(Illegible Signature)
Deputy Attorney General

1978 WL 207606 (S.C.A.G.)