

GOVERNOR'S SALARY COMMISSION

Mansion

Section 21 of Article II of Maryland's Constitution requires the Governor of Maryland reside in Annapolis, "the seat of government". The state provides the Governor with a Mansion adjacent to the State House and with staff, operating costs and a Mansion Fund. The Commission notes that the Mansion serves not only as the home for the Governor but also as a location for conducting the Governor's ceremonial activities. It serves as a focal point for entertaining visitors, for promoting the state and for recognizing the deeds and efforts of various groups and individuals. The Mansion reflects the prestige of the Office of Governor and is important in assisting the Governor in conducting the ceremonial responsibilities of the Office. Although the Governor and family benefit from living there, the Mansion primarily is for the benefit of the state rather than the individual.

The costs involved in staffing and operating the Mansion are included in the Department of General Services budget and are and have been subject to scrutiny by the General Assembly. The Commission believes the budget is the appropriate process for considering funding issues related to the Mansion.

The Commission was advised that the \$60,000 Mansion Fund is available for the Governor to spend for the conduct of the ceremonial aspects of the Office, including the giving of ceremonial gifts. The Commission was also advised that the Governor exercises considerable discretion as to the manner in which the Mansion Fund is spent, that the Fund could be subject to restrictions imposed by the General Assembly as part of the budget process, and that the Fund is subject to legislative audit as to procedural aspects or to any restrictions that may be imposed by the General Assembly. Finally, the Commission was advised that expenditures from the Fund totaled \$124,000 in fiscal 1992 and were utilized as follows: 72% food/beverages, 22% promotions/gifts, and 6% other. The amount in excess of \$60,000 represents reimbursement from state agencies and private organizations for activities held at the Mansion.

The Commission recognizes the Governor should have the preeminent role with respect to operation of the Mansion, including the Mansion Fund. The Commission notes that the General Assembly retains the authority to impose levels of restrictions on the Mansion Fund and that the fiscal and managerial aspects of the Mansion, including the Mansion Fund, are subject to legislative audit. The Commission believes these are the appropriate mechanisms as to the oversight of public funding for the Governor's Mansion.

In summary, the Commission finds that aspects such as transportation, security and the Mansion are integral parts of the Office of Governor and are not direct benefits for the individual who serves as Governor.