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Subject: Plane Proviso 117.23

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Ted and Katherine,

Today, Sen. Lourie offered an amendment which added language to existing law regarding use of the state plane. His amendment only added language to require permission to use the plane similar to what was in Sen. Lourie's stand-alone bill.

Lourie's amendment did not change current law prohibiting the use of the plane for bill signings and press conferences. Also, the Senate Finance Committee Amendment (as posted online) did not change the current law prohibitions.

Therefore, as it stands tonight, the current law outlawing the use of the plane for bill signings and press conferences has not been changed.

As I have said before, proviso 117.23 presents many difficulties because it is unclear what a "press conference" means. The Ethics Commission staff and I spoke about this and we are concerned about how to interpret this language when press is generally at most public events that the Governor attends. Also, it is hard to imagine that the intent of the General Assembly is to prevent the Governor from performing official functions like the annual hurricane fly-around which are several press conferences held on the coast every June for public awareness of hurricane season.

Swati