



Press Release
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

ETHICS COMMISSION ELECTS NEW CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

At today's meeting, the Ohio Ethics Commission unanimously elected Santiago Feliciano, Jr. as its new Chair for this year. Mr. Feliciano has served eight years with the Commission since his original appointment in 1991 and re-appointment in 1997. Mr. Feliciano is Counsel for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Cleveland.

The Commission also unanimously elected Merom Brachman as its Vice-Chair. Mr. Brachman has served on the Commission for many years, including previous service in leadership for the Commission. Mr. Brachman is a private businessman.

The Ethics Commission also announced at its meeting today, in response to a request from the Department of Administrative Services (DAS), that the Commission could not give advisory guidance to DAS involving the MARCS Project. The Commission noted that the purpose of advice from the Commission in such specific contractual circumstances is to provide assistance and advice to public officials before material actions are taken. The Commission stated in its written response that "significant actions have already taken place" regarding the MARCS Project. The Commission concluded that its inability to provide advice after the fact in these specific circumstances was neither a judgment that a public official has violated, nor complied with, the Ethics Laws and related statutes.

The Ohio Ethics Commission is an independent agency of state government charged with interpreting and administering the Ohio Ethics Law for many state and local public officials and employees. The Commission has been serving the public, and state and local governments, since its formation as part of the Ohio Ethics Law in 1973.

