

An. Code, 1924, sec. 353. 1912, sec. 418. 1910, ch. 180, sec. 6 (p. 349). 1912, ch. 563.
1924, ch. 534, sec. 418. 1927, ch. 201, sec. 6.

353. It shall be the duty of the general counsel of the commission subject always to the order of the commission, which may substitute and use any other agent or instrumentality, in its discretion, to represent and appear for the commission in all actions and proceedings involving any question under this sub-title, or under or in reference to any act, order or proceeding of the commission, and if directed to do so by the commission, to intervene, if possible, in any action or proceeding in which any such question is involved; to commence and prosecute all actions and proceedings directed or authorized by the commission, and to expedite in every way possible, final determination of all such actions and proceedings; to advise the commission and each commissioner, when so requested, in regard to all matters in connection with the powers and duties of the commission and of the members thereof, and generally to perform all duties and services as attorney and counsel to the commission which the commission may reasonably require of him.

Whenever application, protest or other form of complaint is made to the commission of or concerning any act or omission, any service, regulation, equipment, appliance or facilities, or the adequacy or quality thereof, any preference or advantage or any prejudice, disadvantage or any discrimination, any rates, tolls, fares or charges, or any regulations or practices with respect thereto, or of or concerning any other matter or thing done, permitted, maintained or omitted to be done by any person, firm or corporation, subject to the jurisdiction of the commission, with respect to any of the requirements imposed by the Public Service Commission Law, or by any other law, by any charter, franchise or ordinance, by any order of the commission or otherwise, it shall be the duty of the People's Counsel, upon a *prima facie* case, or otherwise, to participate in the preparation or reforming of the pleadings before the commission, if need be, or investigating or further investigating the facts of evidence upon which the application, complaint or protest is based or may be based and to appear before the commission in respect to investigations or in support of applications or complaints by or on behalf of or in the interest of the public or in defense of the public interests when involved, and the services of the experts employed by said commission as well as the records and other facilities of the commission shall be availed of by the People's Counsel in the performance of these public duties; provided that nothing herein contained shall be construed to prevent any party or interest in any proceedings before said commission from appearing in person or from being represented by counsel.

All actions and proceedings under this sub-title, and all actions and proceedings commenced and prosecuted by order of the commission, and all actions and proceedings to which the commission may be a party and in which any question arises under this sub-title, or under or concerning any order or action of the commission, shall be preferred over all other civil causes except election causes, in all the courts of the State of Maryland; and shall be heard and determined in preference to all other civil business pending therein, excepting election causes, irrespective of position on the dockets of said courts. The same preference shall be granted upon application of the general counsel to the commission, or the People's Counsel in any action or proceedings in which the general counsel or the People's Counsel may be allowed to intervene.