

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 590

BY REPRESENTATIVE SPELL

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

ELECTIONS: Provides relative to foreign funding for elections and ballot measures

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 18:1461.9, relative to funding of elections; to prohibit the use of certain funds
3 in conducting election administration or ballot questions; to provide for criminal
4 penalties; to provide for certain definitions; and to provide for related matters.

5 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

6 Section 1. R.S. 18:1461.9 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

7 §1461.9. Prohibition on use of certain funds in the conduct of election
8 administration or ballot questions; penalties

9 A. No funds, goods, or services donated by a foreign government or a
10 nongovernmental source shall be used to conduct elections unless provided for in this
11 Code and subject to restrictions provided by law.

12 B. No funds, goods, or services donated by a foreign government, foreign
13 entity, or noncitizen shall be used to advocate for or against any ballot proposition
14 or question, candidate, or political party, either directly or indirectly.

15 C. Any person who commits a violation of this Section shall, upon
16 conviction, be fined not more than twice the amount of such donation or imprisoned,
17 with or without hard labor, for not more than five years, or both.

18 D. For purposes of this Section, the following definitions apply:

19 (1) "Directly or indirectly" means acting either alone or jointly with, through,
20 or on behalf of any other committee, organization, person, or entity.

- 1 (2) "Foreign entity" means:
- 2 (a) Any foreign political party.
- 3 (b) Any entity, such as a partnership, association, corporation, organization,
4 or other combination of persons, that is organized under the laws of, or has its
5 principal place of business in, a foreign country.
- 6 (c) Any United States entity, such as a partnership, association, corporation,
7 or organization, which is wholly, or majority owned by a foreign national, unless:
- 8 (i) Any contribution or expenditure it makes derives entirely from funds
9 generated by the United States entity's United States operations.
- 10 (ii) All decisions concerning the contribution or expenditures are made by
11 individuals who are United States citizens, except for setting overall budget amounts.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 590 Original

2025 Regular Session

Spell

Abstract: Prohibits the use of foreign funds in conducting election administration or ballot questions.

Proposed law prohibits the use of funds, goods, services donated by a foreign government or nongovernmental source to conduct certain elections.

Proposed law prohibits the use of funds, goods, services donated by a foreign government, foreign entity, or noncitizen to promote the following directly or indirectly:

- (1) Ballot proposition or question.
- (2) Candidate.
- (3) Political party.

Proposed law provides that if a person violates proposed law, upon conviction, the penalties are as follows:

- (1) Fine not more than twice the amount of the donation.
- (2) Imprisonment of not more than five years with or without hard labor.
- (3) Both (1) and (2).

Proposed law provides for the following definitions:

- (1) "Directly or indirectly".

(2) "Foreign entity".

(Adds R.S. 18:1461.9)