

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 540

BY REPRESENTATIVE KNOX

ELECTION OFFENSES: Provides for disclosures required in certain digital political communications

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 18:1463(C)(2), relative to disclosure requirements in political
3 materials; to provide for disclosures required on digital materials; and to provide for
4 related matters.

5 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

6 Section 1. R.S. 18:1463(C)(2) is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

7 §1463. Political material; ethics; prohibitions

8 * * *

9 C.

10 * * *

11 (2) Whenever any person, political committee, entity₂ or organization makes
12 a disbursement for the purpose of the financing of any electioneering communication
13 or any digital material that refers to a legally qualified candidate for elected office
14 and that is broadcast within sixty days before any election in which such candidate
15 is on the ballot, such communication or material shall comply with the following
16 items under the following circumstances:

17 (a) If the communication or material is paid for and authorized by a
18 candidate, an authorized political committee of a candidate, or its agents, it shall
19 clearly state that the communication or material has been paid for by such authorized
20 political committee. The name of the political committee paying for the
21 communication or material shall be given in full and no acronyms shall be used.

Present law provides that if the communication is paid for by other persons, but authorized by a candidate, an authorized political committee of a candidate, or its agents, it shall clearly state that the communication is paid for by such other persons and authorized by such authorized political committee. The name of the authorized political committee shall be given in full and no acronyms shall be used.

Proposed law retains present law and applies the same to digital materials that refer to a legally qualified candidate for elected office and that are broadcast within 60 days before any election in which the candidate is on the ballot.

Present law provides that if the communication is not authorized by a candidate, a political committee of a candidate, or its agents, it shall clearly state the (i) name, (ii) physical address (not post office box), and (iii) telephone number and the world-wide web address if available of the person, committee, entity or organization who paid for the communication and state that the communication is not authorized by any candidate or candidate committee. The name of the payer shall be given in full and no acronyms shall be used.

Proposed law retains present law and applies the same to digital materials that refer to a legally qualified candidate for elected office and that are broadcast within 60 days before any election in which such candidate is on the ballot.

Present law defines "electioneering communication" as any broadcast, cable, or satellite communication that refers to a legally qualified candidate for elected office and is broadcast within 60 days before any election in which such candidate is on the ballot.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law defines "digital material" as any material or communication that, for a fee, is placed or promoted on a public facing website, web application, or digital application, including a social network, advertising network, or search engine.

Proposed law retains present law.

Present law provides that an affected candidate or voter shall be entitled to an injunction to restrain future violations of present law.

Proposed law retains present law and applies the same to proposed law.

Present law provides that whoever violates any provision of present law shall be fined not more than \$2,000 or be imprisoned, with or without hard labor, for not more than two years, or both.

Proposed law retains present law and applies the same penalties to a violation of proposed law.

(Amends R.S. 18:1463(C)(2))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill:

1. Specify that proposed law applies to digital communications that refer to a legally qualified candidate for elected office and that are broadcast within 60 days before any election in which the candidate is on the ballot.