
HOUSE BILL 2253

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By Representatives Thai, Hudgins, Kilduff, Ryu, Appleton, Frame, Senn, Ormsby, and Gregerson

Prefiled 12/19/19. Read first time 01/13/20. Referred to Committee on State Government & Tribal Relations.

1 AN ACT Relating to disclaimers for election-related advertising
2 that encourages votes or includes endorsements for people that are
3 not candidates in that election or for that office; adding a new
4 section to chapter 42.17A RCW; and declaring an emergency.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 42.17A
7 RCW to read as follows:

8 (1) All advertising related to an election that encourages,
9 directly or indirectly, people to vote for a person who, as of the
10 date the advertisement is first presented to the public, is not a
11 candidate for that office must include the following statement: "This
12 ad encourages you to vote for a person who is not a candidate for
13 this office as of (the date the advertising is first
14 presented to the public)."

15 (2) All advertising related to an election that incorrectly
16 conveys, directly or indirectly, that a person has the endorsement of
17 an entity or individual for an office in an election, when that
18 person does not have that endorsement for that office in that
19 election, must include the following statement: "As of (the
20 date the advertising is first presented to the public) this person
21 does not actually have the endorsement of (list individuals

1 or entities whose endorsement was stated or implied) for this office
2 in this election."

3 (3) In a written communication, the information required by
4 subsections (1) and (2) of this section must:

5 (a) Appear in a size equal to or greater than the largest size
6 type otherwise used in the communication, adjacent to the text that:

7 (i) Encourages a vote, for the disclaimer in subsection (1) of
8 this section; or

9 (ii) Conveys an endorsement, for the disclaimer in subsection (2)
10 of this section;

11 (b) Not be subject to the half-tone or screening process; and

12 (c) Be set apart from any other printed matter. Except as
13 provided in (a) of this subsection, no text may be before, after, or
14 immediately adjacent to the information required by subsections (1)
15 and (2) of this section.

16 (4) In a communication that is being transmitted by television or
17 other medium that includes a visual image, the information required
18 by subsections (1) and (2) of this section must either:

19 (a) Be clearly spoken; or

20 (b) Appear in print and be visible for at least four seconds, in
21 letters greater than four percent of the visual screen height, with a
22 reasonable color contrast with the background.

23 (5) In a communication that does not include a visual image, the
24 information required by subsections (1) and (2) of this section must
25 be clearly spoken.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** This act is necessary for the immediate
27 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of
28 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes
29 effect immediately.

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