



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

SB1565

Introduced 2/4/2025, by Sen. Mary Edly-Allen

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

10 ILCS 5/29-1.1 new	
10 ILCS 5/29-1.2 new	
10 ILCS 5/29-20.1 new	
10 ILCS 5/29-20.2 new	
10 ILCS 5/29B-5	from Ch. 46, par. 29B-5; formerly Ch. 46, par. 1102
10 ILCS 5/29B-10	from Ch. 46, par. 29B-10; formerly Ch. 46, par. 1103
10 ILCS 5/29B-20	from Ch. 46, par. 29B-20; formerly Ch. 46, par. 1105
10 ILCS 5/29B-30	from Ch. 46, par. 29B-30; formerly Ch. 46, par. 1107
10 ILCS 5/29B-35	from Ch. 46, par. 29B-35; formerly Ch. 46, par. 1108

Provides that the amendatory Act to be referred to as the Truth in Politics Act. Includes legislative findings. Amends the Prohibitions and Penalties Article of the Election Code. Creates prohibitions against (i) false statements to affect a vote, (ii) unlawful attempts to affect the outcome of a campaign, (iii) distribution of materials intending to mislead people on a candidate's incumbency status, and (iv) libel and defamation in political advertising. Provides that, if a person violates the provisions, the person can be enjoined civilly. Provides that a violation of the provisions are Class A misdemeanors. Amends the Fair Campaign Practices Article of the Election Code. Requires (rather than allows) candidates and the chairs of political committees to sign and file the Code of Fair Campaign Practices. Makes changes to the Code of Fair Campaign Practices. Requires a candidate to include in all of the candidate's campaign literature and advertising the following statement: "I am a candidate for (specify office), and I support the accuracy of this message." Provides penalties for failure to timely file a signed Code of Fair Campaign Practices and for violations of the Code of Fair Campaign Practices or other provisions of the Article. Effective February 1, 2026.

LRB104 10231 SPS 20305 b

1 AN ACT concerning elections.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. This Act may be referred to as the Truth in
5 Politics Act.

6 Section 5. Legislative findings. The General Assembly
7 finds:

8 (1) Misinformation occurs when people distribute
9 information based on incorrect factual beliefs and do so
10 confidently.

11 (2) Misinformation has distorted people's views about
12 consequential issues in politics. The American political
13 system and many campaigns are fraught with misinformation.

14 (3) Broadcasters have little power of censorship over
15 legally qualified candidates for public office, so local
16 broadcast television stations have difficulty rejecting
17 these types of advertisements, even if they are blatantly
18 false.

19 (4) Social media has affected the distribution of
20 information and has become a viable tool for
21 misinformation and manipulation in campaigns.

22 (5) Irrelevant, misleading, and vitriolic campaign
23 communications are prevalent.

1 (6) Mudslinging can result in disgusted and frustrated
2 voters, diminished civic engagement, and decreased voter
3 turnout in elections.

4 (7) Honesty, transparency, civility, and substance are
5 values integral to an ethical campaign. Campaigns for
6 public office should adhere to principles of honesty,
7 fairness, responsibility and respect.

8 (8) Campaign communications should present only fair,
9 relevant, and truthful information to the voters for their
10 consideration.

11 (9) Because voters must decide for themselves what
12 they believe about a particular candidate, safeguards
13 should be put into place to improve the integrity and
14 accuracy of statements made during campaigns.

15 Section 10. The Election Code is amended by changing
16 Sections 29B-5, 29B-10, 29B-20, 29B-30, and 29B-35 and by
17 adding Sections 29-1.1, 29-1.2, 29-20.1, 29-20.2, and 29B-6 as
18 follows:

19 (10 ILCS 5/29-1.1 new)

20 Sec. 29-1.1. False statement to affect a vote; violation.

21 (a) As used in this Section:

22 "Person" means any natural person, candidate, partnership,
23 committee, association, corporation, labor organization,
24 political party, or other organization or group of persons,

1 including a political action committee.

2 "Recklessly" means when a person acts in conscious
3 disregard of the truth or falsity of the statement made,
4 published, broadcast, or circulated.

5 (b) No person shall intentionally or recklessly make,
6 publish, broadcast, or circulate, or intentionally or
7 recklessly cause to be made, published, broadcast or
8 circulated, in a campaign-related communication a false
9 statement designed to affect the vote on any public question
10 submitted to the electors at any election or relating to any
11 candidate for election to public office.

12 (c) A violation of this Section may be enjoined in a civil
13 action brought by a candidate against whom a prohibited
14 statement is made, a registered voter who signed a petition
15 for the initiation of a public question against which a
16 prohibited statement is made, a member of the board that
17 approved a resolution or ordinance initiating the public
18 question against which a prohibited statement is made, or, for
19 public questions initiated by the General Assembly, a member
20 of the General Assembly. Any violation of this Section shall
21 be proven by clear and convincing evidence.

22 (d) Any person who violates this Section commits a Class A
23 misdemeanor.

24 (10 ILCS 5/29-1.2 new)

25 Sec. 29-1.2. Unlawful attempt to affect the outcome of a

1 campaign; violation.

2 (a) As used in this Section:

3 "Person" means any natural person, candidate, partnership,
4 committee, association, corporation, labor organization,
5 political party, or other organization or group of persons,
6 including a political action committee.

7 "Recklessly" means when a person acts in conscious
8 disregard of the truth or falsity of the statement made,
9 published, broadcast, or circulated.

10 "Voting record" means the recorded "yes", "no", or
11 "present" vote, or a record from abstaining from a vote, on a
12 bill, ordinance, resolution, motion, amendment, or
13 confirmation.

14 (b) No person shall intentionally or recklessly do any of
15 the following to affect the outcome of a campaign for
16 political office:

17 (1) serve, or cause another person to serve, as an
18 agent or employee in the election campaign organization of
19 a candidate for the purpose of acting to impede the
20 conduct of the candidate's campaign for nomination or
21 election or for the purpose of reporting information about
22 the candidate without the knowledge of the candidate or
23 the candidate's organization; or

24 (2) promise, offer, or give any valuable thing or
25 valuable benefit to any person who is employed by or is an
26 agent of a candidate or a candidate's election campaign

1 organization for the purpose of influencing the employee
2 or agent with respect to the improper discharge of the
3 employee's or agent's campaign duties or to obtain
4 information about the candidate or the candidate's
5 campaign organization.

6 (c) No person shall intentionally or recklessly do any of
7 the following to affect an outcome of a campaign for political
8 office:

9 (1) make a false statement concerning (i) the formal
10 schooling or training completed or attempted by a
11 candidate; (ii) a degree, diploma, certificate,
12 scholarship, grant, award, prize, or honor received,
13 earned, or held by a candidate; or (iii) the period of time
14 during which a candidate attended any school, college,
15 community college, technical school, or educational
16 institution;

17 (2) make a false statement concerning the
18 professional, occupational, or vocational licenses held by
19 a candidate or concerning any position the candidate held
20 for which the candidate received a salary or wages;

21 (3) make a false statement that a candidate or public
22 official has been indicted or convicted of a theft
23 offense, extortion, or other crime involving financial
24 corruption or moral turpitude;

25 (4) make a false statement that a candidate has been
26 indicted for any crime, that a complaint has been filed

1 against the candidate with the State Board of Elections,
2 that the State Board of Elections has conducted or is
3 conducting an investigation of a candidate, or that a
4 candidate has been the subject of a finding by the State
5 Board of Elections without disclosing the outcome of any
6 legal proceedings resulting from the indictment,
7 complaint, investigation, or finding;

8 (5) make a false statement that a candidate or
9 official has a record of treatment or confinement for a
10 mental disorder;

11 (6) make a false statement that a candidate or
12 official has been subjected to military discipline for
13 criminal misconduct or dishonorably discharged from the
14 armed services;

15 (7) make a false statement identifying the source of a
16 statement, issue statements under the name of another
17 person without authorization, or falsely state the
18 endorsement of or opposition to a candidate by a person or
19 publication;

20 (8) make a false statement concerning the voting
21 record of a candidate or public official; or

22 (9) post, publish, circulate, distribute, or otherwise
23 disseminate a false statement concerning a candidate if
24 the statement is designed to promote the election,
25 nomination, or defeat of the candidate.

26 This subsection does not apply to publishing companies.

1 (d) A violation of this Section may be enjoined in a civil
2 action brought by a candidate against whom a prohibited
3 statement is made. Any violation of this Section shall be
4 proven by clear and convincing evidence.

5 (e) Any person who violates this Section commits a Class A
6 misdemeanor.

7 (f) This Section does not apply to a member of the press.

8 (10 ILCS 5/29-20.1 new)

9 Sec. 29-20.1. Misleading statement of incumbent status;
10 violation.

11 (a) As used in this Section, "person" means any natural
12 person, candidate, partnership, committee, association,
13 corporation, labor organization, political party, or other
14 organization or group of persons, including a political action
15 committee.

16 (b) No person shall, with an intent to mislead a voter in
17 connection with the person's campaign for nomination or
18 election to a public office or in connection with the campaign
19 of another person for nomination or election to a public
20 office, assume, pretend, or imply, by his or her statements,
21 conduct, or campaign materials, that he or she is the
22 incumbent of a public office when that is not true.

23 (c) A violation of this Section may be enjoined in a civil
24 action brought by a candidate affected by the prohibited
25 statement of incumbency. Any violation of this Section shall

1 be proven by clear and convincing evidence.

2 (d) Any person who violates this Section commits a Class A
3 misdemeanor.

4 (10 ILCS 5/29-20.2 new)

5 Sec. 29-20.2. Libel and defamation in political
6 advertising; violation.

7 (a) As used in this Section:

8 "Libel per se or defamation per se" means a false
9 statement imputing (1) the commission of a crime; (2)
10 infection with a loathsome communicable disease; (3) an
11 inability to perform or want of integrity in performing
12 employment duties; (4) a lack of ability or that otherwise
13 prejudice a person in the person's profession or business; or
14 (5) adultery or fornication.

15 "Person" means any natural person, candidate, partnership,
16 committee, association, corporation, labor organization,
17 political party, or other organization or group of persons,
18 including a political action committee.

19 "Recklessly" means when a person acts in conscious
20 disregard of the truth or falsity of the statement made,
21 published, broadcast, or circulated.

22 (b) No person shall intentionally or recklessly publish or
23 sponsor the publication in any political advertising or
24 electioneering communication of a statement constituting libel
25 per se or defamation per se.

1 (c) A statement published or sponsored by a person against
2 himself or herself is not a violation of this Section.

3 (d) A violation of this Section may be enjoined in a civil
4 action brought by a candidate affected by the prohibited
5 statement. Any violation of this Section shall be proven by
6 clear and convincing evidence.

7 (e) Any person who violates this Section commits a Class A
8 misdemeanor.

9 (10 ILCS 5/29B-5) (from Ch. 46, par. 29B-5; formerly Ch.
10 46, par. 1102)

11 Sec. 29B-5. Purpose. The Legislature hereby declares that
12 the purpose of this Article is to require ~~encourage~~ every
13 candidate for public office in this State to subscribe to the
14 Code of Fair Campaign Practices. It is the intent of the
15 Legislature that every candidate for public office in this
16 State who subscribes to the Code of Fair Campaign Practices
17 must ~~will~~ follow the basic principles of decency, honesty and
18 fair play in order to encourage healthy competition and open
19 discussion of issues and candidate qualifications and
20 discourage practices that cloud the issues or unfairly attack
21 opponents.

22 (Source: P.A. 86-873; 87-1052.)

23 (10 ILCS 5/29B-10) (from Ch. 46, par. 29B-10; formerly Ch.
24 46, par. 1103)

1 Sec. 29B-10. Code of Fair Campaign Practices. At the time
2 a political committee, as defined in Article 9, files its
3 statements of organization, the State Board of Elections shall
4 give the political committee a blank form of the Code of Fair
5 Campaign Practices and a copy of the provisions of this
6 Article. The State Board of Elections shall inform each
7 political committee that subscription to the Code is mandatory
8 ~~voluntary~~. The text of the Code shall read as follows:

9 CODE OF FAIR CAMPAIGN PRACTICES

10 There are basic principles of decency, honesty, and fair
11 play that every candidate for public office in the State of
12 Illinois has a moral obligation to observe and uphold, in
13 order that, after vigorously contested but fairly conducted
14 campaigns, our citizens may exercise their constitutional
15 right to a free and untrammled choice and the will of the
16 people may be fully and clearly expressed on the issues.

17 THEREFORE:

18 (1) I will conduct my campaign openly and publicly, and
19 limit attacks on my opponent to legitimate challenges to his
20 record.

21 (2) I will not use or permit the use of character
22 defamation, ~~whispering campaigns,~~ libel, or slander, ~~or~~
23 ~~scurrilous attacks~~ on any candidate or his personal or family
24 life.

25 (3) I will not use or permit any appeal to negative
26 prejudice based on race, sex, sexual orientation, religion or

1 national origin.

2 (4) I will not use campaign material of any sort that
3 misrepresents, distorts, or otherwise falsifies the facts, nor
4 will I use malicious or unfounded accusations that aim at
5 creating or exploiting doubts, without justification, as to
6 the personal integrity or patriotism of my opposition.

7 (5) I will not undertake or condone any dishonest or
8 unethical practice that tends to corrupt or undermine our
9 American system of free elections or that hampers or prevents
10 the full and free expression of the will of the voters.

11 (6) I will defend and uphold the right of every qualified
12 American voter to full and equal participation in the
13 electoral process.

14 (7) I will immediately and publicly repudiate methods and
15 tactics that may come from others that I have pledged not to
16 use or condone. I shall take firm action against any
17 subordinate who violates any provision of this Code or the
18 laws governing elections.

19 I, the undersigned, candidate for election to public
20 office in the State of Illinois or chair of a political
21 committee in support of or opposition to a question of public
22 policy, hereby ~~voluntarily~~ endorse, subscribe to, and solemnly
23 pledge myself to conduct my campaign in accordance with the
24 above principles and practices.

25 I, the undersigned, furthermore understand and confirm
26 that I will be subject to the penalties described in Section

1 29B-35 for failure to sign and file this document in a timely
 2 manner, and I understand that I may be subject to the penalties
 3 listed in Article 29 for violating certain activities
 4 prohibited by this Code.

5
 6 Date Signature
 7 (Source: P.A. 103-600, eff. 7-1-24.)

8 (10 ILCS 5/29B-20) (from Ch. 46, par. 29B-20; formerly Ch.
 9 46, par. 1105)
 10 Sec. 29B-20. Acceptance of completed forms; retentions for
 11 public inspection.

12 (a) A candidate for public office or the chair of a
 13 political committee in support of or opposition to a question
 14 of public policy shall file a completed copy of the Code of
 15 Fair Campaign Practices with the election authority in which
 16 the candidate or chair of a political committee resides. The
 17 completed forms shall be completed and filed not later than 2
 18 weeks after the submission of the candidate's nominating
 19 petition or not later than 2 weeks after the chair has
 20 certified to the State Board of Elections the chair's support
 21 or opposition to a question of public policy under Section
 22 28-13.

23 The election authorities shall accept ~~State Board of~~
 24 ~~Elections shall accept, at all times prior to an election, all~~

1 completed copies of the Code of Fair Campaign Practices that
2 are properly subscribed to by a candidate or the chair of a
3 political committee ~~in support of or opposition to a question~~
4 ~~of public policy,~~ and shall retain them for public inspection
5 until 30 days after the election.

6 (b) Not later than 2 days after the date upon which the
7 completed copy of the Code is required to be filed, the
8 election authority shall notify those candidates or chairs who
9 have failed to file a completed copy of the Code and shall
10 include with the notice a copy of the Code required by this
11 Article. The notice shall be sent to the candidate or chairs by
12 certified mail, return receipt requested.

13 (Source: P.A. 103-600, eff. 7-1-24.)

14 (10 ILCS 5/29B-30) (from Ch. 46, par. 29B-30; formerly Ch.
15 46, par. 1107)

16 Sec. 29B-30. Support or opposition to a question of public
17 policy; campaign literature or advertising ~~Subscription to~~
18 ~~Code voluntary.~~

19 (a) The subscription by a candidate or the chair of a
20 political committee in support of or opposition to a question
21 of public policy is mandatory ~~voluntary~~.

22 (b) A candidate, or the chair of a political committee,
23 who has filed a copy of the Code of Fair Campaign Practices may
24 so indicate on any campaign literature or advertising in a
25 form to be determined by the State Board of Elections.

1 (c) A candidate must include in all of the candidate's
2 campaign literature and advertising the following statement:
3 "I am a candidate for (specify office), and I support the
4 accuracy of this message.".

5 (Source: P.A. 100-1027, eff. 1-1-19.)

6 (10 ILCS 5/29B-35) (from Ch. 46, par. 29B-35; formerly Ch.
7 46, par. 1108)
8 Sec. 29B-35. Failure to comply.

9 (a) If a candidate fails to file a completed copy of the
10 Code with the election authority within 5 days of receipt or
11 refusal of the notice required under Section 29B-20, then the
12 candidate's name may not appear on the ballot.

13 This subsection does not apply to any candidate of an
14 office where the Illinois Constitution prescribes the
15 qualifications for candidates to that office but does not give
16 the General Assembly the authority to modify or add to those
17 qualifications.

18 (b) Any person who has signed and filed the Code of
19 Campaign Practices and who violates the provisions of the Code
20 of Campaign Practices or subsection (c) of Section 29B-30
21 commits a Class A misdemeanor.

22 (c) A violation of this Article may be enjoined in a civil
23 action brought by another candidate for the public office that
24 was affected by the violation, a registered voter who signed a
25 petition for the initiation of the public question, a member

1 of the board that approved the resolution or ordinance
2 initiating the public question, or, if the public question was
3 initiated by the General Assembly, a member of the General
4 Assembly, as applicable. Any violation of this Article shall
5 be proven by clear and convincing evidence.

6 ~~Any candidate or chairman of a political committee who~~
7 ~~subscribes to the Code of Fair Campaign Practices and fails to~~
8 ~~comply with any provision of the Code shall not be guilty of a~~
9 ~~criminal offense and nothing in this Article or any other law~~
10 ~~shall be construed to impose any criminal penalty for~~
11 ~~noncompliance with this Article.~~

12 (Source: P.A. 86-1435; 87-1052.)

13 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect February
14 1, 2026.