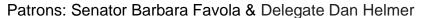


Virginia Sunshine Bill

(SB853, HB1551)

Campaign Advertisement, Independent Expenditures, Electioneering Communications, and Disclaimer Requirements.





KEY PROVISIONS

- Broadens the disclaimer requirements for ads purchased by any person, campaign committee, or
 political committee that are independent expenditures or that advocate for the passage or defeat of a
 referendum. In addition, it extends reporting requirements for independent expenditures to apply to
 non-profit groups. This disclosure is also required for advertisements targeting candidates running in a
 specific election.
- It covers print media, television, radio or an online platform on candidate or referenda campaigns. The bill defines the applicable timeframe to such expenditure to 30 days before a primary election or 60 days before a general or special election.
- It applies to 25 or more **telephone calls** within 90 days of a primary or 180 days of a general or special election and includes **in-kind goods and services**.
- It maintains reporting requirements to the State Board of Elections of such independent expenditures above \$1,000 for statewide election or \$200 for any other election and sets deadlines for reporting within 24 hours of expenditure or disclosure, whichever occurs first.
- It requires that advertisements in print media, television, and radio that constitute independent expenditures (i.e., not coordinated with campaigns) disclose within the advertisements all sponsoring organizations, as well as the top three individual contributors.

WHY VIRGINIA NEEDS THIS BILL:

- In recognition that campaign advertisements and other electioneering communications through
 independent expenditures can influence public opinion on candidate and referenda campaigns, the
 Coalition for Integrity's 2020 S.W.A.M.P Index rated Virginia 46 out of 51 jurisdictions in terms of
 transparency and accountability.
- In a 2021 survey, 88 percent of Virginians, irrespective of party, indicated that they support total
 public disclosure of campaign donations. This is mirrored across the country where states like
 Arizona, Alaska, Tennessee, and North Dakota are putting in place more reporting requirements on
 campaign contributions.
- Public reporting and disclosure should discourage indirect efforts by wealthy and/or out-of-district
 organizations and/or individuals to "buy" electoral results thus strengthening the views and voices
 of local voters.
- Lax campaign finance rules in Virginia allow outside groups to influence elections without much disclosure. In the 2021 election, nearly \$7 million in opaque outside spending financed attack ads against candidates.



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