

TEXAS ETHICS COMMISSION

P. O. Box 12070, Capitol Station Austin, Texas 78711-2070

Tom Ramsay Chair

Jim Clancy Vice Chair

David A. Reisman Executive Director

Mr. Richard E. Dodson

June 28, 2012

Commissioners Hugh C. Akin

Tom Harrison Paul W. Hobby Bob Long Paula M. Mendoza Chase Untermeyer

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Re: Notice of Noncompliance, SC-31206202

Dear Mr. Dodson:

We received sworn complaint SC-31206202 on June 21, 2012. This complaint does not comply with the legal and technical form requirements for a complaint filed with the Texas Ethics Commission.

The Ethics Commission must reject a complaint if it does not comply with certain form requirements. These requirements are meant to guarantee fairness and due process to all persons involved. A complaint must allege facts that constitute a violation of a rule adopted by or a law administered and enforced by the commission, and that provide sufficient detail to reasonably place the respondent on notice of the law violated and the manner and means by which the violation allegedly occurred and to afford the respondent a basis on which to prepare a response. Section 12.61, Ethics Commission Rules. Your complaint alleges that the respondent misrepresented his identity in political advertising or a campaign communication and represented in political advertising or a campaign communication for the did not hold. The allegations are apparently based on an article in a newspaper that stated that the respondent was "voted into judicial office." Although the article at issue states that "information for this story [was] provided by Ben Smith," the complaint does not provide any evidence that the respondent provide the specific language at issue to be used by the newspaper, that the respondent actually wrote any part of the article, or that the article was published in return for consideration. Therefore, the complaint will not be accepted.

If you wish to re-file this complaint, please make the indicated changes and mail the revised complaint no later than 21 days after the date of this letter. I have enclosed your original complaint, and a copy of the rules for filing a sworn complaint. You must submit a complete complaint with a new affidavit. The sworn complaint form is available at <u>www.ethics.state.tx.us/tec/sworn.html</u> on our website. Please read the instructions carefully. If the complaint is properly filed, you will receive a "Notice of Compliance" and a summary of the next few steps of the sworn complaint procedure. If the complaint is not resubmitted by the deadline, you will receive a "Notice of Dismissal." If the resubmitted complaint is again insufficient you will receive another "Notice of Noncompliance."

Future notices and correspondence will be sent by regular mail, unless the commission is notified otherwise.

Page 2 of 2

Please note that at this stage in the process, Ethics Commission members and staff are required by law to keep the complaint and all documents relating to it strictly confidential. However, other persons, including the complainant and respondent named in the complaint, are not bound by this confidentiality requirement.

If you have any questions, please contact me at the above address.

Sincerely,

Homer A. Diaz Assistant General Counsel

HAD:mc

Enclosures: Complaint (original to complainant, copy to respondent) Rules Concerning Sworn Complaints

c: Mr. Ben Smith

FIRST CLASS MAIL

P.O. Box 12070 Austin, Texas 78711-2070 (512) 463-5800 Texas Ethics Commission (TDD 1-800-735-2989) SWORN COMPLAINT BEFORE THE TEXAS ETHICS COMMISSION An individual must be a resident of the state of Texas to be eligible to file a sworn complaint with the Texas Ethics Commission. The complainant is required to attach to the complaint a copy of one of the following documents: complainant's driver's license or personal identification certificate issued under Chapter 521 OFFICE USE ONLY of the Transportation Code, or commercial driver's license issued under Chapter 522 of the Transportation Code: or Docket Number · a utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other government document that Olado shows the name and address of the complainant and is dated not more than 30 days before the date on which the complaint is filed. Effective September 1, 2009, an individual may also be eligible to file a sworn complaint with the Texas Ethics Commission if the individual owns real property in the state of Texas. Under this JUN 2 1 2012 provision, the complainant will be required to attach to the complaint a copy of a property tax bill, notice of appraised value, or other government document that shows the name of the complainant, Texas Ethics Commission shows the address of the real property in Texas, and identifies the complainant as the owner of the real property. I. IDENTITY OF COMPLAINANT COMPLAINANT MS / MRS (MB) MI NAME E 1CHARD NICKNAME SUFFIX 2 COMPLAINANT APT / SLITE # CITY: STATE: ZIP CODE ADDRESS PHYSICAL ADDRESS (Fuil home or business address, including street, city, state, and zip code) 3 COMPLAINANT ADDRESS APT / SUITE # CITY: STATE: ZIP CODE MAILING ADDRESS (check N same (Full home or business address, including street, city, state, and zip code) COMPLAINANT 4 AREA CODE PHONE NUMBER COMPLAINANT EXT 5 TELEPHONE E-MAIL NUMBER ADDRESS II. IDENTITY OF RESPONDENT 6 RESPONDENT MS / MRS IMR MI FIRST NAME EN LAST NICKNAME SUFFIX SMITH RESPONDENT 7 POSITION OR JUDICIAL CANDIDATE TITLE 8 RESPONDENT APT/SUITE # STATE: ADDRESS CITY TIPCODE PHYSICAL 71 ADDRESS (Full home or business address, including street, city, state, and zip code) ADDRESS APT / SUITE #; CITY: ZIP CODE RESPONDENT STATE: 9 MAILING ADDRESS feheck # s (Full home or business address, including street, city, state, and zip code) 11 RESPONDENT 10 RESPONDENT AREA CODE PHONE NUMBER EXT MRBalSMITH QqMail. Com E-MAIL TELEPHONE ADDRESS NUMBER RF KNOWN GO TO PAGE 2

www.ethics.state.tx.us

exas Ethics Commission	P.O. Box 12070	Austin, Texas 78711-2070	(512) 463-5800	(TDD 1-800-735-2989
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Include the specific law(s) only the following laws: (1) and § 335.055 of the Local indicial officer who elected	or rule(s) alleged to ha) Title 15 of the Election I Gov't Code; (4) Subcl to file a financial states	ve been violated. The Texas Ett n Code; (2) Chapters 302, 303, 30 hapter C, Chapter 159 of the Lo nent with the commission; (5) §	nics Commission has 05, 572, 2004 of the Go cal Gov't Code, in con 2452 064 and \$ 2455	jurisdiction to enforce ov't Code; (3) § 334.025 inection with a county
(6) § 306.005 of the Gov't C	ode.	nent with the commission, (5) g	2152.004 and 9 2155.	ous of the Gov t Code,
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Texas Ethics Commission	P.O. Box 12070	Austin, Texas 78711-2070	(512) 463-5800	(TDD 1-800-735-2989)	
V.L	ISTING OF DOC	UMENTS AND OTHER	MATERIALS	Page 4	
List all documents and o	ther materials filed with	n this complaint. Additionally, lis within your knowledge, includin	st all other document	s and other materials	
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Texas Ethics Commission P.O. Box 12070 Austin, Texas 78711-2070 (512) 463-5800 (TDD 1-800-735-2989) VI. AFFIDAVIT Page 5 BASED ON PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE (Execute this affidavit if the acts alleged are within your direct personal knowledge.) KICHARD E DODSON , complainant, 1. swear that I am a resident of the state of Texas. I swear that I have knowledge of the facts alleged in this complaint and that the information contained in this complaint is true and correct. ANGELA M KING My Commission Expires September 29, 2015 Signature of Complainant AFFIX NOTARY STAMP / SEAL ABOVE have F. Brd son Sworn to and subscribed before me, by the said this the O day of to certify which, witness my hand and seal of office. d name of officer administering oath Title of officer administering oath re of off er administoring oath **VII. AFFIDAVIT** BASED ON INFORMATION AND BELIEF (Execute this affidavit if the acts alleged are not within your direct personal knowledge, but are based on reasonablo belief.) I. _ _ , complainant, swear that I am a resident of the state of Texas. I swear that I have reason to believe and do believe that the violation alleged in this complaint has occurred. The source of my information and belief is Signature of Complainant AFFIX NOTARY STAMP / SEAL ABOVE , this the _ _day of Sworn to and subscribed before me, by the said , 20 _____, to certify which, witness my hand and seal of office. Signature of officer administering oath Printed name of officer administering oath Title of officer administering oath

Candidate Ben Smith violated the following sections of the Election Code:

Title 15: Election Code section §255.005-Misrepresentation of Identity

(a) A person commits an offense if, with intent to injure a candidate or influence the result of an election, the person misrepresents the person's identity...."

On June 2, 2012, two days after the primary election and after the results were made public, judicial candidate Ben Smith submitted an article to the Dallas Morning News *Neighbors Go* section stating that he "recently was voted into judicial office at the 380th District Court in Collin County". *See No. 1*

This is not true. Mr. Smith is in a run-off as he did not receive over 50% of the votes. See No. 2-3. Mr. Smith, as a candidate, knew full well when he wrote the article that he was not "voted into office". Mr. Smith wrote the article as it says clearly states at the conclusion of the article "Information for this story provided by Ben Smith. See No. 1

He wrote the article with the intent to injure his opponent and to influence the result of an upcoming run-off election by misleading voters into believing he was the incumbent going into a run-off. He has violated §255.005 and should be held accountable.

Title 15: Election Code §255.006—Misleading Use of Office Title

(a) A person commits an offense if the person knowingly enters into a contract or other agreement to print, publish, or broadcast political advertising with the intent to represent to an ordinary and prudent person that a candidate holds a public office that the candidate does not hold at the time the agreement is made.

Mr. Smith entered into an agreement with the newspaper to print and publish the article. He was the author of the article and was printed and published to voters at his direction. The voters are the ordinary and prudent person and would believe that he did win the Primary when he did not. He is not the Judge and is holding himself out as being the elected Judge of the 380th Judicial District Court, which he is not.

(b) A person commits an offense if the person knowingly represents in a campaign communication that a candidate holds a public office that the candidate does not hold at the time the representation is made.

In the article Mr. Smith *knowingly* represented (two days after the election) in a campaign communication that he was voted the Judge of the 380th Judicial District Court in Collin County, which he is not. At the time he made the representation, he

1

was not the Judge and is still not the Judge as he is in a run-off with the run-off election scheduled for July 31.

(c) For purposes of this section, a person represents that a candidate holds a public office that the candidate does not hold if:

- (1) The candidate does not hold the office that the candidates seeks; and
- (2) The political advertising or campaign communication states the public office sought but does not include the word "for" in a type size that is at least one-half the type size used for the name of the office to clarify that the candidate does not hold that office.

Mr. Smith is not a Judge and in the article he wrote and submitted, he does NOT state he is a candidate "for" the 380th judicial District Court. He clearly states he "was recently voted into judicial office". He has violated this section because he does NOT hold the office of Judge of the 380th Judicial District Court AND he did not include the word "for" in his campaign communication written by him and published to the public.

Election Code §255.006 Penalty

(e) An offense under this section is a Class A Misdemeanor which under Penal Code §12.21, carries a punishment range including up to 1 year in county jail and/or or a \$4,000 maximum fine.

Candidate Smith intentionally submitted a campaign article stating he was voted into office (Judge) of the 380th Judicial District Court in Collin County with the intent to injure his opponent or influence the outcome of the upcoming run-off by gaining an advantage in the election by misleading the public into believing he is an incumbent.

He also entered into a contract with the paper to publish the article with the intent to represent to an ordinary and prudent person that he holds a public office, which he does not. He knew he did not hold the office at the time the representation was made. He also did not include the word "for" Judge as required.

Voters may believe there is no reason to go back to the polls on July 31 as Mr. Smith was already elected the Judge. There is no recourse to the public or to his opponent as the injury and damage have been done.

Due to his violation of numerous sections of the Election Code, Mr. Smith should be found "guilty" and confined in jail, fined the entire amount for his unethical actions and/or removed from the run-off ballot entirely.

2

neighborsgo.com

Lawyer Ben Smith receives community recognition

McKinney

SUBMITTED STORY

Ben Smith, a McKinney resident who recently was voted into judicial office at the 380th District Court in Collin County, has

> been selected for the 2012 40 Undér 40 award sponsored by the *Collin County Business Press.*

> Smith most recently served in the Collin County District Attorney's office as chief of the special prosecution division. In Decem-

Ben Smith

ber 2011, he resigned his position to pursue the 380th district court judgeship and to open his own law practice.

The 40 Under 40 award brings together a group of motivated, engaged and dynamic people. Smith, along with 39 other Collin

County men and women under the age of 40, will be honored June 6 at the Hyatt Place Garland.

"It's an honor to be selected for 40 Under 40 and to be a part of this group," Smith said. "We live in a vibrant and thriving community with many capable young leaders who are committed to making a difference in Collin County."

During his career in Collin County DA's office, Smith also served as chief felony prosecutor in the trial division, second assistant district attorney and chief of the misdemeanor division. He has tried a number of high-profile cases and was the first prosecutor in Collin County history to obtain a conviction from a jury in a mortgage fraud case.

Information for this story provided by Ben Smith.

No.1

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



risco

Photo submitted by LYNN BERGMAN

June 1, 2012 13F

The Other Guys — CJ Starr (from left), Jeff Stachowski and Tyson Faifer — will perform a fundraiser at 8 p.m. June 9 at The Vault at the School of Rock, 6891 Main St.

Comedy fundraiser to help fight against Crohn's disease

SUBMITTED STORY

and was the winner of the Wendy's Clean Comedy Challenge. Lewis has

FRIENDS PLACE

05/29/12

23:15:44

From: electionresults <electionresults@collincountytx.gov> To: electionresults <electionresults@collincountytx.gov> Subject: Collin County Election Results

Date: Tue, May 29, 2012 11:28 pm

Collin County Election Results

Election Summary Report Republican and Democrat Primary Summary For Jurisdiction Wide, All Counters, All Races Combined Accumulated Totals

Registered Voters 435397 - Cards Cast 54901 12.61%

Num. Report Precinct 202 - Num. Reporting 202 100.00%

President - Dem	Dem		
	in the second se	Total	
Number of Precincts		202	
Precincts Reporting		202	100.0 %
Vote For		1	
Times Counted		5676/435397	1.3 %
Total Votes		5533	
Times Blank Voted		143	
Times Over Voted		0	
Number Of Under Votes		0	
Darcy G. Richardson	and a state of the first of the second of	90	1.63%
John Wolfe		53	0.96%
Bob Ely		42	0.76%
Barack Obama		5348	96.66%

	United States Senator - Dem	Dem		
			Total	
	Number of Precincts		202	
	Precincts Reporting		202	100.0 %
	Vote For		1	
	Times Counted	5670	8/435397	1.3 %
	Total Votes		4892	
	Times Blank Voted		782	
	Times Over Voted		2	
2	Number Of Under Votes		0	
	Grady Yarbrough		866	17.70%
	Sean Hubbard		1033	21.12%
	Addie Dainell Allen		1005	20.54%
	Paul Sadler		1988	40.64%

United States Representative, District 4 - Dem Dem

NO. 2

Collin County Election Results

Precincts Reporting	202 100.0 %
Vote For	1
Times Counted	49225/435397 11.3 %
Total Votes	27233
Times Blank Voted	21992
Times Over Voted	0
Number Of Under Votes	0
Robert M. "Bob" Fill	27233100.00%

Justice, 5th Court of Appeals Distri	ct, Place Rep
13 - Rep	
	Total
Number of Precincts	202
Precincts Reporting	202 100.0 %
Vote For	1
Times Counted	49225/435397 11.3 %
Fotal Votes	26765
Fimes Blank Voted	22460
Times Over Voted	0
Number Of Under Votes	0
Elizabeth Lang Miers	26765100.00%

District Judge, 199th Judicial District - Rep	Rep	
n and a second sec	Total	
Number of Precincts	202	
Precincts Reporting	20210	0.0 %
Vote For	. 1	
Times Counted	49225/435397 1	1.3 %
Total Votes	34467	
Times Blank Voted	14758	
Times Over Voted	0	
Number Of Under Votes	0	÷
Angela Tucker	19508 50	6.60%
Bob Dry	14959 43	3.40%

District Judge, 380th Judicial Distric	t-Rep Rep
	Total
Number of Precincts	202
Precincts Reporting	202100.0 %
Vote For	1
Times Counted	49225/435397 11.3 %
Total Votes	33913
Times Blank Voted	15304
Times Over Voted	8
Number Of Under Votes	0

Page 16 of 21

Count County Election Results

9679 28.54% 7472 22.03%
4600 13.56% 12162 35.86%

District Judge, 401st Judicial District - Rep	Rep		
,	Total		
Number of Precincts	202		
Precincts Reporting	202	100.0 %	
Vote For	1		
Times Counted	49225/435397	11.3 %	
Total Votes	29719		
Times Blank Voted	19506		1.0
Times Over Voted	0		
Number Of Under Votes	0		
Mark Rusch	19867	66.85%	
James C. Mosser	9852	33.15%	

	District Judge, 416th Judicial Distr	ict - Rep Rep		
		Total		
	Number of Precincts	202		
	Precincts Reporting	202 100.0 %		
	Vote For	1		
	Times Counted	49225/435397 11.3 %		
	Total Votes	26529		
-	Times Blank Voted	22696		
	Times Over Voted	0		
	Number Of Under Votes	0		
	Chris Oldner	26529100.00%		

Judge, County Court at Law Number	2 - Rep Rep	
	Total	
Number of Precincts	202	
Precincts Reporting	202100.0 %	
Vote For	1	
Times Counted	49225/435397 11.3 %	
Total Votes	32823	
Times Blank Voted	16400	
Times Over Voted	2	
Number Of Under Votes	0	
Barnett Walker	14258 43.44%	
Sharon Ramage	11568 35.24%	
Gene Sera	6997 21.32%	

Sheriff - Rep

Rep

Total

COLLIN COUNTY

Sheriff re-elected; Hill wins commissioner race

Smith, Green head into runoff for former Judge Wooten's bench

By JEFFREY WEISS Staff Writer lweiss@dallasnews.com

Collin County voters reelected their longtime sheriff and cast ballots for a couple of positions whose previous occupants lost their jobs after being convicted of felonies. Turnout in Collin County, as with most of the state, was

light.

There were no Democratic candidates in these races, so the winner of the Republican primary will be elected.

Collin County Sheriff Terry Box was first elected to his post in 1985. With more than 90 percent of the votes counted Tuesday, Box was rolling to an easy win, pulling more than twice as many votes as his two opponents, combined.

Until last November, Suzanne Wooten was the judge for the 308th District Court. She was convicted of bribery and other charges. Two of the four candidates running to fill that seat appear headed for a runoff.

Ben Smith, a Collin County prosecutor for seven years. got a bit more than a third of the votes on Tuesday. Terri Green, who cited her experience with family law cases, pulled a bit less than a third of the votes.

Smith's endorsements included the McKinney Police Association and the Collin

V Mark Rusch (I)

REPUBLICAN

James Mosser

Barnett Walker

Sharon Ramage

Gene Sera

✓ Terry Box (I) Chuck Presley

REPUBLICAN

Michael Brooks

Chris Hill Ray Eckenrode

√ Joe Wright Cesare Venegoni

√ Sherry Shloman Derbha Houston

Jones

County Deputies Association. Green's list of endorsements included the mayors of Frisco. Allen, Parker, Prosper, New Hope and Celina.

Collin County District Clerk Patricia Crigger was found guilty last year of having her employees work for her re-election campaign on county time. Local attorney Andrea Stroh Thompson was appointed to fill the position and was holding a comfortable lead over her lone rival. businessman Tim Baker.

Thompson's endorsements included nods from the Collin County Conservative Republicans Club and state Sen. Florence Shapiro.

A tea party favorite took the race for Precinct 3 on the **Collin County Commissioners** Court. Chris Hill's slim early lead over Ray Eckenrode grew as the votes continued to be tallied. Hill's endorsements included the North Texas Tea Party, Texas Tea Party and the Collin County Conservative Republicans.

DALLAS COUNTY √ - Nominee, R - To runoff, (I) - Incumbent

162nd DISTRICT JUDGE - DEMOCRAT Precincts reporting: 97% 44% 25% 9% 7% R Phyllis Lister Brown R Maricela Moore 1,780 12,712 Baltasar Cruz 4,695 4,108 3,666 3,034 David Dlaz Teresa Guerra Snelson Scott Perry **CRIMINAL DISTRICT JUDGE 4 - DEMOCRAT** Precincts reporting: 97% ns 27,267 63% 15,965 37% ✓ Dominique Collins J.R. Cook SHERIFF - REPUBLICAN Precincts reporting: 97 9 32,420 659 17,528 351 √ Kirk Launius Renee Christian 65% SHERIFF - DEMOCRAT Precincts reporting: 97% 37,605 73% 13,861 27% √ Lupe Valdez (I) Charile Thomas **COUNTY COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 1 -**REPUBLICAN Precincts reporting: 97 % 7,887 72% 1 3,009 28% √ Larry Miller **Cecile Fernandez**

COUNTY COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 1-DEMOCRAT Precincts reporting: 94 Theresa Daniel Daniel Davis Clayton 4,465 2,619 1,287 53% 31% 15% Gloria Tercero Levario COUNTY COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 3 -DEMOCRAT Precincts reporting: 1003 ce (1) 20,735 76% ps 2,862 10% h 1,930 7% 1,751 6% John Wiley Price (I) Micah B. Phillips Betty Cubreath Bennie Brown COLLIN COUNTY 199th DISTRICT JUDGE - REPUBLICAN Precincts reporting: 100% 19.200 56% √ Angela Tucker Bob Dry 56% 14,802 380th DISTRICT JUDGE - REPUBLICAN Precincts reporting: 100 12,004 36% 9,571 29% 7,400 22% 4,518 13% Ben Smith R Terri Green Jody Johnson Chip Jarvis

RESULTS

401st DISTRICT JUDGE - REPUBLICAN SHERIFF - REPUBLICAN Precincts reporting: 100% Precincts reporting: 100% 19,639 67% 9,745 33% V William Travis 17,185 Benny Parkey (I) 11.017 Jesse Flores 3,485 COUNTY COURT AT LAW JUDGE -TAX ASSESSOR-COLLECTOR - REPUBLICAN Precincts reporting: 100% r 14,087 43% e 11,444 35% 6,869 22% Precincts reporting: 100% Michelle French 15,367 51% 14,781 49% Marc Moffitt ✓ Michael Truitt (I) 3,035 71% Hali Grant SHERIFF - REPUBLICAN Precincts reporting: 100% 25,493 69% 5,862 16% 5 5,519 15% CONSTABLE, PRECINCT 3 - REPUBLICAN Precincts reporting: 100% **COUNTY COMMISSIONER, PRECINCT 3-**√ Jerry Raburn (I) Barry Minoff 2,448 **CONSTABLE, PRECINCT 4 - REPUBLICAN** Precincts reporting: 100% 54% 5,897 Precincts reporting: 100% 4.446 69% √ Tim Burch 2.020 **CONSTABLE, PRECINCT 4 - REPUBLICAN** Sam Mooney Precincts reporting: 100% 6,543 77% nl 1,986 23% **CONSTABLE, PRECINCT 5 - REPUBLICAN** Precincts reporting: 100% R Dale Chegwidden 2,361 2,277 729 R Doug Boydston George Riolas DENTON COUNTY **CONSTABLE, PRECINCT 6 - REPUBLICAN** 16th DISTRICT JUDGE - REPUBLICAN Precincts reporting: 100% Precincts reporting: 100% n 24,597 83% √ Ron Smith (I) 3,030 **Douglas** Lee 175 4.880

ROCKWALL COUNTY COUNTY COMMISSIONER, PRECINCT 1-REPHRI ICAN

54% 35% 11%

60%

31%

44%

42%

62% 38%

and the second se	-
ncts reporting:	100%
	39%
	36%
659	25%
PRECINCT 4-	
orts reporting.	100%
	48%
418	34%
223	18%
	72%
	28%
	75%
	25%
	200
JUNIY	
- REPUBLICAN	
incts reporting	: 100%
26,336	37
24,907	35
19,053	27
ER. PRECINCT 1	-
incts reporting	1.100
(1) 10,705	78
5 3,102	22
	ncts reporting: 593 418 223 1 - REPUBLICA ncts reporting: 1,715 680 4 - REPUBLICA ncts reporting 300 DUNTY - REPUBLICAN fncts reporting 26,336 24,907

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(a) An officer or employee of a state agency or political subdivision may not knowingly use or authorize the use of an internal mail system for the distribution of political advertising.

(b) Subsection (a) does not apply to:

(1) the use of an internal mail system to distribute political advertising that is delivered to the premises of a state agency or political subdivision through the United States Postal Service; or

(2) the use of an internal mail system by a state agency or municipality to distribute political advertising that is the subject of or related to an investigation, hearing, or other official proceeding of the agency or municipality.

(c) A person who violates this section commits an offense. An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

(d) In this section:

(1) "Internal mail system" means a system operated by a state agency or political subdivision to deliver written documents to officers or employees of the agency or subdivision.

(2) "State agency" means:

(A) a department, commission, board, office, or other agency that is in the legislative, executive, or judicial branch of state government;

a construction and

(B) a university system or an institution of higher education as defined by Section 61.003, Education Code; or

(C) a river authority created under the constitution or a statute of this state.

§ 255.004. True Source of Communication

(a) A person commits an offense if, with intent to injure a candidate or influence the result of an election, the person enters into a contract or other agreement to print, publish, or broadcast political advertising that purports to emanate from a source other than its true source.

(b) A person commits an offense if, with intent to injure a candidate or influence the result of an election, the person knowingly represents in a campaign communication that the communication emanates from a source other than its true source.

(c) An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

§ 255.005. Misrepresentation of Identity

(a) A person commits an offense if, with intent to injure a candidate or influence the result of an election, the person misrepresents the person's identity or, if acting or purporting to act as an agent, misrepresents the identity of the agent's principal, in political advertising or a campaign communication.

Title 15, Election Code

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(b) An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

§ 255.006. Misleading Use of Office Title

(a) A person commits an offense if the person knowingly enters into a contract or other agreement to print, publish, or broadcast political advertising with the intent to represent to an ordinary and prudent person that a candidate holds a public office that the candidate does not hold at the time the agreement is made.

(b) A person commits an offense if the person knowingly represents in a campaign communication that a candidate holds a public office that the candidate does not hold at the time the representation is made.

(c) For purposes of this section, a person represents that a candidate holds a public office that the candidate does not hold if:

(1) the candidate does not hold the office that the candidate seeks; and

(2) the political advertising or campaign communication states the public office sought but does not include the word "for" in a type size that is at least one-half the type size used for the name of the office to clarify that the candidate does not hold that office.

(d) A person other than an officeholder commits an offense if the person knowingly uses a representation of the state seal in political advertising.

(e) An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

§ 255.007. Notice Requirement on Political Advertising Signs

(a) The following notice must be written on each political advertising sign:

"NOTICE: IT IS A VIOLATION OF STATE LAW (CHAPTERS 392 AND 393, TRANSPORTATION CODE), TO PLACE THIS SIGN IN THE RIGHT-OF-WAY OF A HIGHWAY."

(b) A person commits an offense if the person:

(1) knowingly enters into a contract to print or make a political advertising sign that does not contain the notice required by Subsection (a); or

(2) instructs another person to place a political advertising sign that does not contain the notice required by Subsection (a).

(c) An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor.

(d) It is an exception to the application of Subsection (b) that the political advertising sign was printed or made before September 1, 1997, and complied with Subsection (a) as it existed immediately before that date.

(e) In this section, "political advertising sign" means a written form of political advertising designed to be seen from a road but does not include a bumper sticker.