

1460

2013-2014 Regular Sessions

I N S E N A T E

(PREFILED)

January 9, 2013

Introduced by Sen. STEWART-COUSINS -- read twice and ordered printed,
and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Elections

AN ACT to amend the election law, in relation to defining the term
"express advocacy"

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1 Section 1. Subdivision 1 of section 14-100 of the election law, as
2 amended by chapter 71 of the laws of 1988, is amended to read as
3 follows:
4 1. "political committee" means any corporation aiding or promoting and
5 any committee, political club or combination of one or more persons
6 operating or co-operating to aid or to promote the success or defeat of
7 a political party or principle, or of any ballot proposal; or to aid or
8 take part in the election or defeat of a candidate for public office or
9 to aid or take part in the election or defeat of a candidate for nomination
10 at a primary election or convention, including all proceedings
11 prior to such primary election, or of a candidate for any party position
12 voted for at a primary election, or to aid or defeat the nomination by
13 petition of an independent candidate for public office; but nothing in
14 this article shall apply to any committee or organization for the
15 discussion or advancement of political questions or principles without
16 connection with any vote or to a national committee organized for the
17 election of presidential or vice-presidential candidates; PROVIDED
18 HOWEVER THAT EXPRESS ADVOCACY AS DEFINED BY SUBDIVISION TWELVE OF THIS
19 SECTION SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ARTICLE; provided,
20 [however] FURTHER, that a person or corporation making contribution or
21 contributions to a candidate or a political committee which has filed
22 pursuant to section 14-118 OF THIS ARTICLE shall not, by that fact
23 alone, be deemed to be a political committee as herein defined.

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[] is old law to be omitted.

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1 S 2. Section 14-100 of the election law is amended by adding two new
2 subdivisions 12 and 13 to read as follows:
3 12. "EXPRESS ADVOCACY" MEANS A COMMUNICATION:
4 (1) THAT CONTAINS EXPRESS WORDS SUCH AS VOTE, OPPOSE, SUPPORT, ELECT,
5 DEFEAT, OR REJECT, WHICH CALL FOR THE ELECTION OR DEFEAT OF A CANDIDATE,
6 OR
7 (2) WHEN TAKEN AS A WHOLE WITH LIMITED REFERENCE TO EXTERNAL EVENTS,
8 SUCH AS THE PROXIMITY TO THE ELECTION, COULD ONLY BE INTERPRETED BY A
9 REASONABLE PERSON AS CONTAINING ADVOCACY OF THE ELECTION OR DEFEAT OF
10 ONE OR MORE CLEARLY IDENTIFIED CANDIDATES BECAUSE:
11 (A) THE ELECTORAL PORTION OF THE COMMUNICATION IS UNMISTAKABLE, UNAM-
12 BIGUOUS, AND SUGGESTIVE OF ONLY ONE MEANING; AND
13 (B) REASONABLE MINDS COULD NOT DIFFER AS TO WHETHER IT ENCOURAGES
14 ACTIONS TO ELECT OR DEFEAT ONE OR MORE CLEARLY IDENTIFIED CANDIDATES OR
15 ENCOURAGES SOME OTHER KIND OF ACTION.
16 13. "INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURE" MEANS AN EXPENDITURE MADE IN SUPPORT OR
17 OPPOSITION OF A CANDIDATE:
18 (I) THAT EXPRESSLY ADVOCATES FOR THE ELECTION OR DEFEAT OF A CLEARLY
19 IDENTIFIED CANDIDATE; AND
20 (II) THAT THE CANDIDATE OR HIS OR HER AGENTS OR AUTHORIZED POLITICAL
21 COMMITTEE(S) DID NOT AUTHORIZE, REQUEST, SUGGEST, FOSTER OR COOPERATE
22 WITH IN ANY WAY.
23 S 3. This act shall take effect immediately.