

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1720
By: Bohac
Elections
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Whenever a measure is being brought before the voters for approval ensuring they have the most accurate and truthful information to make an informed decision is paramount. Political subdivisions have an important role in this process by providing background and unbiased information to voters. If a political subdivision makes false statements on communications made with public funds, this creates a situation where the public can be misled.

H.B. 1720 prohibits an officer or employee of a political subdivision from spending or authorizing the spending of public funds for a communication describing a ballot measure if the communication contains material information the officer or employee knows is false.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 1720 amends the Election Code to prohibit an officer or employee of a political subdivision from spending or authorizing the spending of public funds for a communication describing a ballot measure if the communication contains material information the officer or employee knows is false. The bill makes it a Class A misdemeanor to violate this provision.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2009.