

2019 -- H 5986

=====
LC000263
=====

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2019

—————
A N A C T

RELATING TO ELECTIONS

Introduced By: Representative Stephen R. Ucci

Date Introduced: April 11, 2019

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 17-23-18 of the General Laws in Chapter 17-23 entitled "Election
2 Offenses" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **17-23-18. Political advertising from official budgets prohibited.**

4 (a) Except in accordance with subsections (b) and (c) of this section, no ~~no~~ elected
5 official shall permit the expenditure of public funds from any official budget under his or her
6 authority for any publication, advertisement, broadcast, or telecast of his or her photograph,
7 voice, or other likeness to be broadcast or distributed to the public during the one hundred and
8 twenty (120) days preceding any primary or general election in which he or she is a candidate.

9 (b) This section shall not be construed to prohibit an official from appearing on regular
10 capitol television programming operated by the general assembly or on television stations
11 operated by the Rhode Island PBS Foundation during the period of time or programming of
12 regular or special meetings of city or town councils or any local governmental board, agency or
13 other entity.

14 (c) This section shall not be construed to prohibit the publication, broadcast, or telecast of
15 any photograph, voice, or other likeness of an elected official which is distributed to the public by
16 or through an official government website or social media presence provided that such website or
17 social media presence is continuously maintained in the regular course of official government
18 business exclusively for general informational or transparency purposes.

1 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

=====
LC000263
=====

EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO ELECTIONS

1 This act would permit the publication, broadcast, or telecast of the likeness of an elected
2 official within one hundred twenty (120) days preceding any primary or general election in which
3 that official is a candidate, when such likeness is distributed to the public by or through an official
4 government website or social media presence that is continuously maintained in the regular
5 course of official government business exclusively for general informational or transparency
6 purposes.

7 This act would take effect upon passage.

=====
LC000263
=====