

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 1996 RECONVENED SESSION

CHAPTER 1042

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 24.2-901, 24.2-908, 24.2-910 and 24.2-1014 of the Code of Virginia, relating to requirements for campaign finance disclosure and for identifying persons responsible for campaign writings; penalties.

[S 170]

Approved May 6, 1996

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 24.2-901, 24.2-908, 24.2-910 and 24.2-1014 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 24.2-901. Definitions.

A. As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Campaign committee" means the committee designated by a candidate to receive all contributions and make all expenditures for him or on his behalf in connection with his nomination or election.

"Contribution" means money and services of any amount, and any other thing of value over \$100, given, advanced, promised, loaned, or in any other way provided to a candidate, campaign committee, political committee, inaugural committee, or person for the purpose of influencing the outcome of an election or defraying the costs of the inauguration of a Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or Attorney General. "Contribution" includes money, services, or things of value in any way provided by a candidate to his own campaign.

"Expenditure" means money and services of any amount, and any other thing of value over \$100, paid, promised, loaned, provided, or in any other way disbursed by any candidate, campaign committee, political committee, inaugural committee, or person for the purpose of influencing the outcome of an election or defraying the costs of the inauguration of a Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or Attorney General.

"Inaugural committee" means any committee which anticipates receiving contributions or making expenditures, from other than publicly appropriated funds, for the inauguration of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or Attorney General and related activities.

"Independent expenditure" means an expenditure made by any person or political committee which is not made to, controlled by, coordinated with, or made upon consultation with a candidate, his campaign committee, or an agent of the candidate or his campaign committee.

"Person" means any individual or corporation, partnership, business, labor organization, membership organization, association, cooperative, or other like entity.

"Political action committee" means any organization, other than a campaign committee or political party committee, established or maintained in whole or in part to receive and expend contributions for political purposes.

"Political committee" means any state political party committee, congressional district political party committee, county or city political party committee for a county or city with a population of more than 100,000, organized political party group of elected officials, political action committee, ~~or~~ other committee, *person* or group of persons which receives contributions or makes expenditures for the purpose of influencing the outcome of any election. The term shall not include: (i) a campaign committee ~~or~~; (ii) a political party committee exempted pursuant to § 24.2-911; or (iii) *a person who receives no contributions from any source and whose only expenditures are made solely from his own funds and are either contributions made by him which are reportable by the recipient pursuant to Article 4 (§ 24.2-914 et seq.) of this chapter or independent expenditures which are reportable by him to the extent required by subsection B of § 24.2-910, or a combination of such reportable contributions and independent expenditures.*

B. For the purpose of applying the filing and reporting requirements of Article 3 (§ 24.2-908 et seq.) and Article 4 (§ 24.2-914 et seq.) of this chapter, the terms "person," "political action committee," and "political committee" shall not include an organization holding tax-exempt status under § 501 (c) (3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code which, in providing information to voters, does not advocate or endorse the election or defeat of a particular candidate, group of candidates, or the candidates of a particular political party.

§ 24.2-908. Statement of organization.

Each ~~person~~ and political committee which anticipates receiving contributions or making expenditures in excess of ~~\$100~~ \$200 in a calendar year shall file with the State Board a statement of organization (i) within ten days after its organization or, if later, within ten days after the date on which it has information which causes the ~~person~~ ~~or~~ committee to anticipate it will receive contributions or make expenditures in excess of ~~\$100~~ \$200 or on which it otherwise becomes subject to the provisions of this

chapter, and (ii) annually thereafter by January 15. This requirement shall not apply to a person or committee whose only disbursement is in the form of a contribution and which itself receives no contributions from which the disbursement is made.

The statement of organization shall include:

1. The name and address of the person or committee;
2. The names, addresses, and relationships of affiliated or connected organizations;
3. The area, scope, or jurisdiction of the person or committee;
4. The name, residence and business addresses, and position of the custodian, if any, of books and accounts;
5. The name, residence address, and position of other principal officers, including officers and members of the finance committee, if any;
6. The name, address, office sought, and party affiliation of each individual whom the person or committee is supporting or opposing for nomination or for election to any public office whatever or, if supporting the entire ticket of any party, the name of the party;
7. In the event the person or committee is promoting or opposing a referendum, the subject of the referendum, the date and location of the election, and a statement whether the person or committee is promoting or opposing the referendum question;
8. In the case of an inaugural fund committee, the name, address, and office to which elected of the person on whose behalf the committee is organized;
9. A statement whether the person or committee is a continuing one;
10. The disposition of residual funds which will be made in the event of dissolution;
11. A listing of all banks, safe-deposit boxes, or other repositories used; and
12. Such other information as shall be required by the State Board.

Any change in information previously submitted in a statement of organization shall be reported to the State Board within ten days following the change.

Any person or committee which, after having filed one or more statements of organization, disbands or determines it will no longer receive contributions or make expenditures during the calendar year in an aggregate amount exceeding \$100 \$200 shall so notify the State Board.

§ 24.2-910. Political committees and persons required to file disclosure reports.

A. Any person or political committee required to file a statement of organization by § 24.2-908 shall be required to maintain records and file disclosure reports as provided in Article 4 (§ 24.2-914 *et seq.*) of this chapter.

B. Any person or who is not a political committee making and who makes independent expenditures, in the aggregate, in excess of \$500 for a statewide election or \$200 for any other election shall maintain records and report pursuant to Article 4 (§ 24.2-914 *et seq.*) of this chapter all contributions received and such independent expenditures made of including:

1. Any funds, in the aggregate, in excess of \$500 for a statewide election or \$100 for any other election expended for the purpose of influencing the outcome of any election for public office; and
2. Any funds in any amount expended to publish or broadcast to the public any material referring to a candidate by name, description, or other reference and (i) advocating his election or defeat, (ii) setting forth his position on any public issue, voting record, or other official acts, or (iii) otherwise designed to influence individuals to cast their votes for or against him or to withhold their votes from him; and
3. Any funds in any amount expended to publish or broadcast to the public any material promoting or opposing a question submitted to the voters in a referendum.

§ 24.2-1014. Identifying persons responsible for campaign writing; penalties.

A. As used in this section "writing" includes any printed or otherwise reproduced statement or advertisement made for the purpose of influencing the outcome of an election for public office, but shall not include editorial comment or news coverage which is sponsored and financed by the news medium publishing or broadcasting it nor writings authorized by the candidate on novelties including, but not limited to, pens, pencils, and buttons to be attached to wearing apparel.

B. It shall be unlawful for any person to cause any writing other than a television or radio broadcast to appear concerning any potential nominee or clearly identified candidate, or concerning any question to be submitted to the voters unless such writing plainly identifies the person responsible for it. The writing shall carry the statement "authorized by" and contain the following information to complete the statement:

1. The name of the candidate if the writing is authorized by the candidate or his campaign committee;
2. The name of the political party committee if the writing is authorized by that committee; or
3. If authorized by any person other than the candidate, his campaign committee, or a political party committee, either:
 - a. In the case of a committee that has filed a statement of organization under § 24.2-908, the full name of the committee and a registration number provided by the State Board, or
 - b. In any other case, the full name and residence address of the individual responsible for the writing.

C. It shall be unlawful for any person to use a false or fictitious name or address on any such writing described in subsection B.

D. It shall be unlawful for any person to cause any radio or television statement to appear *concerning any clearly identified candidate* unless the advertisement or statement contains information which plainly identifies the candidate, committee, or individual responsible for it.

E. Any person violating any provision of this section shall be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed fifty dollars; and, in the case of a willful violation, he shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The procedure to enforce the civil penalty provided in this section shall be as stated in § 24.2-929. The violation of this section shall not void any election.