

Honorable Delegates

Please vote for SB0978.

When this bill was in the Senate, I submitted testimony urging that the bill be defeated for the following reasons

This bill has been rushed in an attempt to get it passed before the primary on May 14. It is already within 90 days of the primary. Also, by restricting enforcement to a period 90 days before an election, it seems that this bill would allow campaign ads with Artificial Intelligence (AI) from the date of the primary until roughly mid-September. By then, any possible damage from the ads could already have occurred. More time should be taken to think this process through.

Because the amendments to this bill have removed my objections, I am now recommending that you vote for this bill.

Assuming one is caught using synthetic media in a campaign, the bill requires that the perpetrator must disclose that the images or audio used did not occur in reality and lists the punishments (Fine, possible imprisonment, and ineligibility to run for office for 4 years). However, the bill does not state who would ascertain whether any campaign ad used synthetic media.

Also, it no longer burdens the State Board of Elections (SBE) to be the group that adopts regulations to monitor campaign ads to determine whether ads contain faked images and/or voices.

Once someone has determined that campaign ads do contain faked images and/or voices, SBE has the option to enjoin a candidate from running those ads.

Please vote for SB0978.

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