

HB 1777 -- ETHICS

SPONSOR: Lovasco

This bill requires the Secretary of State (SOS) to investigate violations of election statutes relating to the use of public funds for political advertising purposes on printed materials. Any person may file a complaint against a state department or its director for violations. The SOS has 30 days to dismiss the complaint or start an investigation and notify the complainant of the decision. If the SOS, or any person whose complaint is denied, wishes to proceed then they may file a petition in the Circuit Court of Cole County against the agency or political subdivision. Procedures for filing are specified in the bill. If the court finds a violation, then civil penalties of 10 times the amount of an expenditure or \$10,000, whichever is greater, may be imposed on a department or political subdivision. Directors and administrators may be personally liable for up to \$1,000 in civil penalties. Injunctive relief and court costs shall also be imposed as specified in the bill.

Publications in compliance with federal election laws and the full text of proposed ballot measures may be printed as specified in the bill.