

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

# HOUSE BILL NO. 1986

## 103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE COOK.

4826H.011

JOSEPH ENGLER, Chief Clerk

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### AN ACT

To repeal section 115.637, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof one new section relating to election offenses, with penalty provisions.

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*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:*

Section A. Section 115.637, RSMo, is repealed and one new section enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as section 115.637, to read as follows:

115.637. The following offenses, and any others specifically so described by law, shall be class four election offenses and are deemed misdemeanors not connected with the exercise of the right of suffrage. Conviction for any of these offenses shall be punished by imprisonment of not more than one year or by a fine of not more than two thousand five hundred dollars or by both such imprisonment and fine:

(1) Stealing or willfully concealing, defacing, mutilating, or destroying any sample ballots that may be furnished by an organization or individual at or near any voting place on election day, except that this subdivision shall not be construed so as to interfere with the right of an individual voter to erase or cause to be erased on a sample ballot the name of any candidate and substituting the name of the person for whom he or she intends to vote; or to dispose of the received sample ballot;

(2) Printing, circulating, or causing to be printed or circulated, any false and fraudulent sample ballots which appear on their face to be designed as a fraud upon voters;

(3) Purposefully giving a printed or written sample ballot to any qualified voter which is intended to mislead the voter;

(4) On the part of any candidate for election to any office of honor, trust, or profit, offering or promising to discharge the duties of such office for a less sum than the salary, fees,

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

18 or emoluments as fixed by law or promising to pay back or donate to any public or private  
19 interest any portion of such salary, fees, or emolument as an inducement to voters;

20 (5) On the part of any canvasser appointed to canvass any registration list, willfully  
21 failing to appear, refusing to continue, or abandoning such canvass or willfully neglecting to  
22 perform his duties in making such canvass or willfully neglecting any duties lawfully  
23 assigned to him or her;

24 (6) On the part of any employer, making, enforcing, or attempting to enforce any  
25 order, rule, or regulation or adopting any other device or method to prevent an employee from  
26 engaging in political activities, accepting candidacy for nomination to, election to, or the  
27 holding of, political office, holding a position as a member of a political committee, soliciting  
28 or receiving funds for political purpose, acting as chairman or participating in a political  
29 convention, assuming the conduct of any political campaign, signing, or subscribing his or her  
30 name to any initiative, referendum, or recall petition, or any other petition circulated pursuant  
31 to law;

32 (7) On the part of any person authorized or employed to print official ballots, or any  
33 person employed in printing ballots, giving, delivering, or knowingly permitting to be taken  
34 any ballot to or by any person other than the official under whose direction the ballots are  
35 being printed, any ballot in any form other than that prescribed by law, or with unauthorized  
36 names, with names misspelled, or with the names of candidates arranged in any way other  
37 than that authorized by law;

38 (8) On the part of any election authority or official charged by law with the duty of  
39 distributing the printed ballots, or any person acting on his or her behalf, knowingly  
40 distributing or causing to be distributed any ballot in any manner other than that prescribed by  
41 law;

42 (9) Any person having in his or her possession any official ballot, except in the  
43 performance of his or her duty as an election authority or official, or in the act of exercising  
44 his or her individual voting privilege;

45 (10) Willfully mutilating, defacing, or altering any ballot before it is delivered to a  
46 voter;

47 (11) On the part of any election judge, being willfully absent from the polls on  
48 election day without good cause or willfully detaining any election material or equipment and  
49 not causing it to be produced at the voting place at the opening of the polls or within fifteen  
50 minutes thereafter;

51 (12) On the part of any election authority or official, willfully neglecting, refusing, or  
52 omitting to perform any duty required of him or her by law with respect to holding and  
53 conducting an election, receiving and counting out the ballots, or making proper returns;

54 (13) On the part of any election judge, or party watcher or challenger, furnishing any  
55 information tending in any way to show the state of the count to any other person prior to the  
56 closing of the polls;

57 (14) On the part of any voter, except as otherwise provided by law, ~~[allowing his or~~  
58 ~~her ballot to be seen by any person with the intent of letting it be known how he or she is~~  
59 ~~about to vote or has voted, or]~~ knowingly making a false statement as to his or her inability to  
60 mark a ballot;

61 (15) On the part of any election judge, disclosing to any person the name of any  
62 candidate for whom a voter has voted;

63 (16) Interfering, or attempting to interfere, with any voter inside a polling place;

64 (17) On the part of any person at any registration site, polling place, counting location  
65 or verification location, causing any breach of the peace or engaging in disorderly conduct,  
66 violence, or threats of violence whereby such registration, election, count or verification is  
67 impeded or interfered with;

68 (18) Exit polling, surveying, sampling, electioneering, distributing election literature,  
69 posting signs or placing vehicles bearing signs with respect to any candidate or question to be  
70 voted on at an election on election day inside the building in which a polling place is located  
71 or within twenty-five feet of the building's outer door closest to the polling place, or, on the  
72 part of any person, refusing to remove or permit removal from property owned or controlled  
73 by such person, any such election sign or literature located within such distance on such day  
74 after request for removal by any person;

75 (19) Stealing or willfully defacing, mutilating, or destroying any campaign yard sign  
76 on private property, except that this subdivision shall not be construed to interfere with the  
77 right of any private property owner to take any action with regard to campaign yard signs on  
78 the owner's property and this subdivision shall not be construed to interfere with the right of  
79 any candidate, or the candidate's designee, to remove the candidate's campaign yard sign from  
80 the owner's private property after the election day.

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