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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

A bill for an act

relating to state government; regulating intimidation, interference, and deceptive

NINETY-SECOND SESSION

H. F. No. 1119

02/15/2021 Authored by

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Authored by Greenman and Frazier
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on State Government Finance and Elections

practices in voter registration and voting; providing criminal penalties; amending 1.3 Minnesota Statutes 2020, sections 8.31, subdivision 1; 211B.32, subdivision 1; 1.4 proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 211B. 1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA: 1.6 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 8.31, subdivision 1, is amended to read: 1.7 Subdivision 1. Investigate offenses against provisions of certain designated sections; 1.8 assist in enforcement. The attorney general shall investigate violations of and assist in the 1.9 enforcement of the following laws: 1.10 (1) the law of this state respecting unfair, discriminatory, and other unlawful practices 1.11 in business, commerce, or trade, and specifically, but not exclusively, the Nonprofit 1.12 Corporation Act (sections 317A.001 to 317A.909), the Act Against Unfair Discrimination 1.13 and Competition (sections 325D.01 to 325D.07), the Unlawful Trade Practices Act (sections 1.14 325D.09 to 325D.16), the Antitrust Act (sections 325D.49 to 325D.66), section 325F.67 1.15 and other laws against false or fraudulent advertising, the antidiscrimination acts contained 1.16 in section 325D.67, the act against monopolization of food products (section 325D.68), the 1.17 act regulating telephone advertising services (section 325E.39), the Prevention of Consumer 1.18 Fraud Act (sections 325F.68 to 325F.70), and chapter 53A regulating currency exchanges 1.19 and assist in the enforcement of those laws as in this section provided.; and 1.20 (2) section 211B.075 regulating voter intimidation, interference, and deceptive practices 1 21 in elections. 1.22

Section 1.

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Sec. 2. [211B.075] VOTER INTIMIDATION, INTERFERENCE, AND DECEPTIVE

2.1

PRACTICES PROHIBITED. 2.2 Subdivision 1. Intimidation. (a) No person, whether acting under color of law or 2.3 otherwise, shall engage in intimidation directed at: 2.4 2.5 (1) a voter; (2) an elections official; or 2.6 2.7 (3) a person aiding with any aspect of the election process, including but not limited to assisting another person in registering to vote or encouraging another person to cast a ballot. 2.8 2.9 (b) As used in this subdivision, "intimidation" means any action or attempted action, regardless of the actor's mental state of mind, that intimidates, threatens, coerces, or injures 2.10 another person, or any action or attempted action that would cause a reasonable person to 2.11 feel intimidated, threatened, coerced, or injured, due to the person's exercise of the right to 2.12 vote, efforts to assist another person in exercising the right to vote, or conduct of duties 2.13 related to election administration. Intimidation may include but is not limited to an action 2.14 or attempted action that causes a person to be fearful of potential collateral consequences 2.15 2.16 or future harm. Subd. 2. Deceptive practices. (a) No person, whether acting under color of law or 2.17 otherwise, shall within 60 days of an election cause, by any means, information to be 2.18 transmitted that the person: 2.19 (1) intends to impede or prevent another person from exercising the right to vote; and 2.20 2.21 (2) knows to be materially false. (b) The prohibition in this subdivision includes but is not limited to information regarding 2.22 the time, place, or manner of holding an election; the qualifications for or restrictions on 2.23 voter eligibility at an election; and threats to physical safety associated with casting a ballot. 2.24 Subd. 3. Interference with registration or voting. No person, whether acting under 2.25 color of law or otherwise, shall intentionally hinder, interfere with, or prevent another person 2.26 from voting, registering to vote, or aiding another person in casting a ballot or registering 2.27 2.28 to vote. Subd. 4. Aiding and abetting; conspiracy. No person, whether acting under color of 2.29 law or otherwise, shall: 2.30

Sec. 2. 2

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3.1	(1) intentionally aid, abet, incite, compel, or coerce a person to violate the provisions of
3.2	this section or attempt to aid, abet, incite, compel, or coerce a person to violate the provisions
3.3	of this section; or
3.4	(2) conspire, combine, agree, or arrange with any other person to take action, or aid or
3.5	abet any action, in violation of this section.
3.6	Subd. 5. Criminal penalty; civil enforcement. (a) A person who intentionally violates
3.7	this section is guilty of a felony and may be sentenced to imprisonment of not more than
3.8	two years or payment of a fine of not more than \$100,000, or both.
3.9	(b) The attorney general or any injured person may enforce this section consistent with
3.10	the authority provided in section 8.31. An action filed by an injured person under section
3.11	8.31, subdivision 3a, is in the public interest.
3.12	(c) Remedies allowable under this section are cumulative and do not restrict any other
3.13	right or remedy otherwise available to an injured person. An action for a penalty or remedy
3.14	under this section must be brought within two years of the date the violation is alleged to
3.15	have occurred. The complaint process provided in sections 211B.31 to 211B.36 does not
3.16	apply to violations of this section.
3.17	Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 211B.32, subdivision 1, is amended to read:
3.18	Subdivision 1. Administrative remedy; exhaustion. (a) Except as provided in paragraph
3.19	paragraphs (b) and (c), a complaint alleging a violation of chapter 211A or 211B must be
3.20	filed with the office. The complaint must be finally disposed of by the office before the
3.21	alleged violation may be prosecuted by a county attorney.
3.22	(b) Complaints arising under those sections and related to those individuals and
3.23	associations specified in section 10A.022, subdivision 3, must be filed with the Campaign
3.24	Finance and Public Disclosure Board.
3.25	(c) Violations of section 211B.075 may be enforced as provided in that section.

Sec. 3. 3