

2021 -- H 5830

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- OFFENSES PERTAINING TO SCHOOLS [SEE TITLE 16  
CHAPTER 97 - THE RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION ACT]

Introduced By: Representative Patricia A. Serpa

Date Introduced: February 24, 2021

Referred To: House Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 16-38 of the General Laws entitled "Offenses Pertaining to Schools  
2 [See Title 16 Chapter 97 - The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby amended by adding  
3 thereto the following section:

4 **16-38-14. Use of school district listservs.**

5 (a) Each school district shall adopt a policy governing the use of any listserv to distribute  
6 information to the parents or guardians of the students enrolled in the school district.

7 (b) It shall be unlawful for any person or institution, educational or otherwise, to knowingly  
8 circulate or permit to be circulated on any such listserv information:

9 (1) Related to any activity directed at the success or failure of a political party or candidate  
10 for federal, state or municipal office; or

11 (2) Promoting the solicitation or receipt of political contributions, including invitations to  
12 fundraising events, for any such party or candidate; provided, however, this section shall not  
13 prohibit the distribution of information about a candidate public forum that is open on an equal  
14 basis to all candidates for that office.

15 (c) Any person or institution that is found guilty of a violation of this section shall be  
16 punished by a civil fine not exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00).

17 (d) For purposes of this section, "listserv" means a computer software application that  
18 allows a sender to send one email to a list, and then transparently send it on to the addresses of all

1 [subscribers to the list.](#)

2 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- OFFENSES PERTAINING TO SCHOOLS [SEE TITLE 16  
CHAPTER 97 - THE RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION ACT]

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- 1           This act would prohibit the use of a school district's listserv to distribute any political
- 2   advertisement, invitation, and/or propaganda.
- 3           This act would take effect upon passage.

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