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# STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

## IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## **JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026**

## AN ACT

## RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- SAFEGUARDING ELECTION CANDIDATES USING REASONABLE EXPENDITURES ACT

Introduced By: Senators Gallo, Ciccone, Tikoian, LaMountain, Felag, Burke, Gu, Murray, Bissaillon, and Famiglietti  
Date Introduced: January 26, 2023

Date Introduced: January 23, 2026

Referred To: Senate Special Legislation and Veterans Affairs

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 17 of the General Laws entitled "ELECTIONS" is hereby amended by  
2 adding thereto the following chapter:

## CHAPTER 25.4

## 4. SAFEGUARDING ELECTION CANDIDATES USING REASONABLE EXPENDITURES

5 ACT

## 17-25.4-1. Title.

7        This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Safeguarding Election Candidates Using  
8        Reasonable Expenditures Act."

## 17-25.4-2. Purpose.

10        The intent of this chapter is to authorize the use of campaign funds by candidates and  
11        elected officials for security related expenses, including home and office security systems and  
12        ongoing monitoring, in response to threats arising from public service or candidacy.

### 17-25.4-3. Definitions.

14 As used in this chapter, unless a different meaning clearly appears from the context:

15        (1) "Campaign funds" means contributions received in support of a candidate or  
16        officeholder regulated under this state's campaign finance law.

17                   (2) "Immediate family" means a spouse, registered domestic partner, or any minor child  
18                   residing in the candidate/officeholder's household.

(3) "Security expenses" means:

(i) The purchase, installation, maintenance, and upgrade of physical security equipment  
ng, surveillance cameras, door access controls, locks, alarms, motion detectors installed by  
any authorized and licensed to perform such work in this state; and

(ii) Monitoring and other services, including maintenance, directly associated with such

8                   (a) A candidate or elected official may use campaign funds/public funds for verified  
9 security expenses incurred, to address security risks to themselves, campaign staff, or their  
10 immediate family associated with their status or activities as a candidate or public figure.

11                   (b) The maximum amount of campaign funds that may be used for physical security  
12                   equipment and its installation is limited to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) per individual and  
13                   campaign cycle.

14 (c) Campaign funds may not be used for:

15 (1) Purchase of firearms or ammunition;

16 (2) Payments to family members or entities owned/controlled by them; or

17 (3) Unrelated home improvements.

#### **17-25.4-5. Verification and documentation.**

19 (a) The candidate or officeholder shall determine that the security expenses are reasonably  
20 related to security risks to themselves and their immediate family.

21 (b) All such expenditures shall be:

22                   (1) Reported to the state campaign finance agency in accordance with rules governing non-  
23                   campaign disbursements;

(2) Supported by itemized receipts or invoices; and

25 (3) Subject to public disclosure under applicable campaign finance laws; provided  
26 however, the disclosure shall not include plans, designs or schematics.

27 **(c) No documentation of a specific threat or law enforcement verification shall be required.**

#### **17-25.4-6. Rules and regulations.**

29 The board of elections shall adopt rules and regulations as needed to implement and enforce  
30 this chapter, including standardized reporting formats and audit procedures.

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

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

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RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- SAFEGUARDING ELECTION CANDIDATES USING  
REASONABLE EXPENDITURES ACT

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- 1        This act would authorize the use of campaign funds for security related expenses, including
- 2        home and office security systems and ongoing monitoring, in response to threats arising from their
- 3        public service or candidacy.
- 4        This act would take effect upon passage.

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