



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE LIZ LINEHAN
ONE HUNDRED THIRD ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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CHAIR
COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN

MEMBER
VETERAN'S AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Chairwoman Senator Flexer, Chairman Representative Fox, Vice Chairs, Ranking Members and esteemed members of the GAE committee,

I'm here to testify in support of HB 5815, AAC Political Advertising.

During the 2018 election, my constituents were bombarded with photoshopped images meant to deceive them into believing I had a close, personal, and possibly romantic relationship with then-Governor Dannel Malloy. The mail piece, which was widely distributed to every active voter in the district of any political party as well as unaffiliated voters, featured an image which appeared to be of me in an embrace with the Governor. However, the doctored photo, which was passed off as a real image, was actually one of myself with a friend and colleague, but the Governor's head was photoshopped on to my friend's body. This falsified image was paired with the tag line, "Liz Stands By Her Dan" - a play on the song "Stand By Your Man", by Tammy Wynette, which is a song about a jilted lover. Let me be clear: This falsified image, along with the tag line, was an outright lie to the residents of Cheshire, Southington, and Wallingford, which insinuated that I had an intimate or even sexual relationship with Governor Malloy, in a disgusting attempt to discredit the work I've done for the community over the last decade.

This legislation will require a doctored image to be labeled as such, so that voters have a clear understanding when others attempt to deceive them. The bill also calls for a minimum font size of 8. I would go a step further and suggest the font size be raised to 12 points, and require it to be clearly visible in a contrasting color, directly below the image.

Unfortunately, we cannot legislate that those seeking elected office conduct themselves with class, or require that they don't stoop as low as to doctor a photo and suggest that a sexual relationship has occurred between colleagues. Successful women have been victims of these sexist attacks for decades. However, we can require that those seeking elected office must be honest in their advertising, and provide a disclaimer that images have been doctored.

Thank you for your consideration.

Representative Liz Linehan
Proudly serving Cheshire, Southington, and Wallingford