

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 281

To require a Federal agency to include language in certain educational and advertising materials indicating that such materials are produced and disseminated at taxpayer expense.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 28, 2015

Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To require a Federal agency to include language in certain educational and advertising materials indicating that such materials are produced and disseminated at taxpayer expense.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Taxpayer Trans-
5 parency Act of 2015”.

1 **SEC. 2. REQUIREMENTS FOR PRINTED MATERIALS AND AD-**
2 **VERTISEMENTS BY FEDERAL AGENCIES.**

3 (a) IDENTIFICATION OF FUNDING SOURCES.—Each
4 communication funded by a Federal agency for advertising
5 or educational purposes shall clearly state—

6 (1) in the case of a printed communication, in-
7 cluding mass mailings, signs, and billboards, that
8 the communication is printed and published at tax-
9 payer expense; and

10 (2) in the case of a communication transmitted
11 through radio, television, the Internet, or any means
12 other than the means referred to in paragraph (1),
13 that the communication is produced and dissemi-
14 nated at taxpayer expense.

15 (b) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—

16 (1) PRINTED COMMUNICATION.—Any printed
17 communication described under subsection (a)(1)
18 shall—

19 (A) be of sufficient type size to be clearly
20 readable by the recipient of the communication;

21 (B) be contained in a printed box set apart
22 from the other contents of the communication;
23 and

24 (C) be printed with a reasonable degree of
25 color contrast between the background and the
26 printed statement.

1 (2) RADIO, TELEVISION, AND INTERNET COM-
2 MUNICATION.—

3 (A) AUDIO COMMUNICATION.—Any audio
4 communication described under subsection
5 (a)(2) shall include an audio statement in a
6 clearly spoken manner indicating that the com-
7 munication is produced and disseminated at
8 taxpayer expense.

9 (B) VIDEO COMMUNICATION.—Any video
10 communication described under subsection
11 (a)(2) shall include a statement indicating that
12 the communication is produced and dissemi-
13 nated at taxpayer expense, which shall—

14 (i) be conveyed in a clearly spoken
15 manner;

16 (ii) be conveyed by a voice-over or
17 screen view of the person making the state-
18 ment; and

19 (iii) appear in writing at the end of
20 the communication in a clearly readable
21 manner with a reasonable degree of color
22 contrast between the background and the
23 printed statement, for a period of not less
24 than 4 seconds.

1 (C) E-MAIL COMMUNICATION.—Any e-mail
 2 communication described under subsection
 3 (a)(2) shall—

4 (i) be of sufficient type size to be
 5 clearly readable by the recipient of the
 6 communication;

7 (ii) be set apart from the other con-
 8 tents of the communication; and

9 (iii) be displayed with a reasonable de-
 10 gree of color contrast between the back-
 11 ground and the printed statement.

12 (c) EXCEPTIONS.—Subsections (a) and (b) do not
 13 apply to—

14 (1) information in or relating to a solicitation
 15 for—

16 (A) offers for a Federal contract; or

17 (B) applications or submissions of a bid or
 18 proposal for a Federal grant or other means of
 19 funding under a Federal program; and

20 (2) advertisements for employment opportuni-
 21 ties, not including advertising materials developed
 22 for use for recruitment and retention of personnel
 23 for the Armed Forces.

24 (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

1 (1) FEDERAL AGENCY.—The term “Federal
2 agency” has the meaning given the term “Executive
3 agency” in section 133 of title 41, United States
4 Code.

5 (2) MASS MAILING.—The term “mass mail-
6 ing”—

7 (A) means any mailing or distribution of
8 499 or more newsletters, pamphlets, or other
9 printed matter with substantially identical con-
10 tent, whether such matter is deposited singly or
11 in bulk, or at the same time or different times;
12 and

13 (B) does not include any mailing—

14 (i) in direct response to a communica-
15 tion from a person to whom the matter is
16 mailed; or

17 (ii) of a news release to the commu-
18 nications media.

19 (e) SOURCE OF FUNDS.—The funds used by a Fed-
20 eral agency to carry out this Act shall be derived from
21 amounts made available to the agency for advertising or
22 other communications regarding the programs and activi-
23 ties of the agency.

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