

For Immediate Release

June 2, 2015

Elections Nova Scotia Issues By-election Advertising Advisory

(Halifax, NS) – Elections Nova Scotia today issued an advisory bulletin warning prospective participants in the upcoming by-elections in Dartmouth South, Sydney-Whitney Pier and Cape Breton Centre that there are rules regarding election advertising.

“Reflecting on the recent violations of the *Elections Act* by the caucus offices of two of the political parties, I am concerned that Nova Scotians may not be aware that we are in an election period,” said Richard Temporale, Nova Scotia’s chief electoral officer. “Under the Act, the election period in a by-election begins as soon as there is a vacancy in an electoral district and not when the writ of election is issued like in a general election. And while the Act has very clear rules on third party election advertising that apply equally in both instances, the clock starts ticking earlier in a by-election.”

A third party election advertisement is a message sponsored by an individual or group, other than a registered party or registered candidate, that promotes or opposes a registered political party, the election of a candidate, or a candidate’s position on an issue.

A third party may advertise a position on any political issue they deem important. Examples would include a specific policy proposal, increasing or decreasing taxes, or funding for education or health services. Any third party advertisement on radio, television, newspaper, a billboard or roadside signs, the Internet or any other type of media would be considered election advertising if it was directed at electors in an electoral district with a vacancy. Campaign buttons, clothing, or other things that identify the users as supporters or opponents of any registered political party or candidate also can be types of third party advertising.

A third party must register immediately upon spending \$500 on advertising that meets the definition of election advertising under the Act and is limited to spending no more than \$2,135.02 in each electoral district where a by election is being held.

“Advertising breaches of the Act, although infrequent, are considered serious offences because they can unfairly advantage or disadvantage candidates,” said Temporale.

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