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May 15, 2013

Honorable Robert Duncan
Chair
Senate Committee on State Affairs
PO Box 12068
Capitol Station
Austin, TX 78711

Subject: May 16, 2013, State Affairs Committee Hearing, HB 1398

Dear Senator Duncan:

We write this letter on behalf of the bi-partisan leadership of the American Association of Political Consultants (AAPC). AAPC is the largest association of political professionals in the world. We represent those working in the field of politics throughout the United States and in that capacity we would like to voice our strong opposition to HB 1398.

Since our founding in 1969, the AAPC has supported political free speech, the ethical conduct of campaigns, and full transparency and disclosure to clearly identify the source of electioneering messages. However, the AAPC has taken the position that while disclosure requirements should reveal the source of electioneering messages, such disclosure information should not be required to overwhelm the campaign message itself.

We feel that HB 1398 will suppress and impeded political free speech by mandating unneeded regulation of speech. It would appear that your existing Texas state law covers the issue addressed in HB 1398.

The AAPC's opposition to this legislation is consistent with our past positions to similar proposals in other jurisdictions. Our position is not limited to just Texas. The AAPC would oppose similar legislation in any state regardless of which side it may seem to be directed. Thus we are not targeting any group, just stand in opposition to unwarranted regulation in our opposition to the suppression of free political speech.

Thank you for taking the views of our industry into account as you consider this proposed legislation.

Sincerely,

Dale Emmons, President
D-Kentucky
AAPC

Art Hackney, Vice-President
R-Alaska
AAPC

Copies to:

Honorable Robert Deuell, Vice Chair
Honorable Rodney Ellis
Honorable Troy Fraser

Honorable Joan Huffman
Honorable Eddie Lucio, Jr
Honorable Robert Nichols

Honorable Leticia Can De Putte
Honorable Tommy Williams