



TEXAS ETHICS COMMISSION



ETHICS ADVISORY OPINION NO. 435

October 12, 2001

Whether a political advertising disclosure statement is required on business cards that include political advertising. (AOR-485)

A candidate has asked whether a political advertising disclosure statement is required on business cards that include political advertising.

The Election Code requires that political advertising include certain information. Elec. Code § 255.001(a). There is an exception to that requirement, however, for “campaign buttons, pins, hats, or similar campaign materials.” *Id.* § 255.001(b). The issue here is whether business cards are similar to campaign buttons, pins, and hats and therefore excepted from the political advertising disclosure requirement. In previous opinions, we have determined that lapel stickers, emery boards, pens, magnets, balloons, wooden nickels, and candy wrappers are similar to campaign buttons, pins, and hats and are therefore excepted from the political advertising disclosure requirement. [Ethics Advisory Opinion Nos. 424](#) (1999); [390](#) (1998); [387](#) (1997); [184](#) (1994). The common feature of those forms of political advertising is that they can all be fairly described as “novelty items.” Business cards, in our opinion, do not belong in that category. Therefore, political advertising in the form of a business card must include the information required by section 255.001(a).

SUMMARY

Political advertising in the form of a business card must include the information required by Election Code section 255.001(a).