



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF THE UNITED STATES

April 23, 2018

*President*  
**Chris Carson**  
Burbank, California

To: Members of the U.S. Senate

*Vice President*  
**Karen Nicholson**  
Midland, Texas

From: Chris Carson, President

*Secretary*  
**Toni Zimmer**  
Spartan, New Jersey

Re: Cosponsor and Pass S. 1989, the Honest Ads Act

*Treasurer*  
**Elaine Wiant**  
Dallas, Texas

Every American has the right to know who is paying for online political ads, whether it is organizations with ties to foreign governments or wealthy special interests at home. We must work to prevent meddling in our elections, and to ensure that Americans know the source of political messages. The League of Women Voters urges you to cosponsor S. 1989, the Honest Ads Act, if you have not already done so, and to publicly urge passage of this important piece of legislation.

*Directors*

**Maribel Balbin**  
Miami Lakes, Florida

**Amy Hjerstedt**  
Falls Church, Virginia

**Kim Lauth**  
Knoxville, Tennessee

The most important thing we can do to preserve the integrity of our electoral process is to increase transparency. Every American has the right to know who is paying for political ads but the current transparency rules are decades behind the times. Communications methods such as telegrams and typewriters are mentioned while the internet—where 65% of Americans say they received information from during the 2016 Presidential election—is not. It is time to update the outdated transparency rules around electronic communications. Online advertisements have a huge influence on information voters are exposed to and Americans have the right to know who is funding such advertisements.

**Jessica Lowe-Minor**  
Tallahassee, Florida

**Brenda Rogers**  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

The Honest Ads Act is bipartisan legislation that addresses the need for new rules that expose efforts aimed at influencing U.S. elections. The Act updates the definition of “electioneering communications” to include paid internet and digital advertisements. This will ensure that digital ads referring to federal candidates in the lead up to elections are subject to the same campaign finance disclosure requirements monitored by the Federal Election Commission as any other ad.

**Jessica Rohloff**  
Willmar, Minnesota

**Deborah Turner**  
Omaha, Nebraska

The Act also requires digital platforms, like Facebook and Twitter, to maintain a public file of “qualified political advertisements” and the details around the purchase, payment and targeting of such ads online. Finally, the Act acknowledges that voters have a right know about foreign sponsors and funders of campaign-related ads by requiring broadcasters, providers and online platforms to make reasonable efforts to ensure that qualified political advertisements are not directly or indirectly purchased by a foreign national.

*Chief Executive Officer  
(Interim)*  
**Anisa Tootla**

The League of Women Voters strongly urges you recognize the importance of Congressional action on this legislation. This is a manner of utmost importance to our national security, to the integrity of our elections and to protecting our democracy from sabotage by foreign adversaries.