

# Regulation of Political Opinion Polling Bill [HL]

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**B I L L**

TO

Make provision for the regulation of political opinion polling in the United Kingdom; and for connected purposes.

**B**E IT ENACTED by the Queen’s most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

**1 The Political Opinion Polling Regulation Authority**

- (1) The Secretary of State must, after consulting the leaders of all political parties represented in the House of Commons, establish by regulations a Political Opinion Polling Regulation Authority (the “Authority”) within 1 year of the passing of this Act. 5
- (2) The Authority shall have responsibility for the making of rules for political opinion polling in the United Kingdom, including but not limited to—
  - (a) specifying approved sampling methods;
  - (b) producing guidance on the wording of questions to be put to the public in a political opinion poll; 10
  - (c) arrangements for the publication of polls including whether such publication should be allowed in such a period that the Authority considers appropriate before the election or referendum to which they refer.
- (3) The regulations must make provision about the constitution of the Authority and in particular must provide that its management board consists of representatives of—
  - (a) polling organisations nominated by the British Polling Council,
  - (b) political parties, and
  - (c) the media. 15 20
- (4) The Authority must—
  - (a) publish rules within 6 months of its establishment,
  - (b) consider at least annually whether amendments to the rules are required, and

- (c) publish any amendments to the rules together with explanatory notes, whenever they consider it appropriate.
- (5) The Secretary of State shall lay a statutory instrument containing the rules or amendments to the rules, as and when they are published, before each House of Parliament, which shall be subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament. 5
- (6) The Secretary of State shall pay in respect of the Authority any expenses, remuneration and allowances that the Secretary of State may determine.
- (7) Regulations under this section shall be made by a statutory instrument, which shall not be made unless a draft of the instrument has been laid before, and approved by a resolution of, each House of Parliament. 10
- (8) For the purposes of this Act, “political opinion polling” means the undertaking and publishing of any poll, survey or inquiry designed to measure the public’s intentions with regard to voting in— 15
- (a) any local authority elections,
  - (b) any elections to the Scottish Parliament, the Northern Ireland Assembly or the National Assembly for Wales,
  - (c) any elections to Parliament, and
  - (d) any referendum held within the United Kingdom.
- 2 Enforcement** 20
- A person who undertakes political opinion polling in breach of any rules made under section 1 shall be liable to a penalty of an amount specified under the regulations made under that section.
- 3 Extent, commencement and short title**
- (1) This Act applies to the whole of the United Kingdom. 25
- (2) This Act comes into force on the day on which it is passed.
- (3) This Act may be cited as the Regulation of Political Opinion Polling Act 2016.
- (4) Nothing in this Act shall impose any charge on the people or on public funds, or vary the amount or incidence of or otherwise alter any such charge in any manner, or affect the assessment, levying, administration or application of any money raised by any such charge. 30

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*Brought from the Lords, 19 January 2016.*

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*Ordered, by The House of Commons,  
to be Printed, 1 March 2016.*

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