

Polling Stations (Regulation) Bill

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TO

Make it an offence to campaign in prescribed areas around polling stations on the day of certain elections; and for connected purposes.

BE 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 Offence of campaigning within a prescribed area

- (1) It shall be an offence to engage in campaigning activity within a prescribed area around a polling station on the day of a relevant election at any time during the period in which the polling station is open.
- (2) In this Act, “campaigning activity” means— 5
- (a) the promotion or distribution of any literature associated with election candidates, political parties or associated organisations;
 - (b) the use of audio equipment, whether stationary or mobile, for the propagation of messages relating to an election; or
 - (c) oral communication for the purpose of eliciting voting intentions or influencing the casting of a vote. 10
- (3) The “prescribed area” referred to in subsection (1) shall be an area represented by a circle with a radius of 250 metres from the main entrance of a polling station.
- (4) For the purposes of subsection (1) a “relevant election” is— 15
- (a) a Parliamentary election;
 - (b) a European Parliamentary election;
 - (c) an election to the National Assembly for Wales;
 - (d) an election to the Northern Ireland Assembly;
 - (e) a local government election in England or Northern Ireland; 20
 - (f) a mayoral election; or
 - (g) a referendum.
- (5) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (1) shall be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale.

2 Interpretation

In this Act –

“European Parliamentary election” shall have the same meaning as in section 27(1) of the Representation of the People Act 1985 (c. 50);

“local government election” shall have the same meaning, in respect of England, as in section 203(1) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (c. 2) and, in respect of Northern Ireland, as in the Electoral Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1962 (c. 14); 5

“mayoral election” means an election conducted under the Local Authorities (Mayoral Elections) (England and Wales) Regulations 2002; 10

“polling station” shall include polling place, within the meaning given by section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 (c. 22);

“referendum” means a referendum conducted under the Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (England) Regulations 2001.

3 Short title, commencement and extent

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- (1) This Act may be cited as the Polling Stations (Regulation) Act 2007.
- (2) This Act shall come into force at the end of the period of six months beginning with the day on which it is passed.
- (3) This Act extends to England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

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To make it an offence to campaign in prescribed areas around polling stations on the day of certain elections; and for connected purposes.

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