

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია
GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



**35 organizations participating in the
campaign “This Affects You”
submitted package of legislative
proposals to the Parliament of
Georgia**

Member nongovernmental and media organizations of the Campaign “This Affects You” are about to launch second stage of the Campaign which aims to introduce

amendments to the Election Code and to make the media environment more flexible during the pre-election period. On May 7, the Campaign participants submitted packet of the legislative proposals to the Parliament of Georgia which had been signed by 35 NGOs and media organizations. The draft-amendments are open for other signatures as well.

The legislative proposal is focused on the following issues:

1.Improvement of the vote-counting procedures during the Election Day –according to the draft, the number of voters shall be recorded in the final protocol before the ballot boxes are open in precincts. It will prevent the election commissions to change the number of voters who had taken part in the process throughout the day. The amendment will blockade the possibility to amend the final protocol if the unacceptable number of voters had arrived at the precinct. The counting mechanisms were farther clarified in the proposals.

2. Ensuring transparency of activities of the election administration – online-transmitting of CEC and district election commissions’ sessions during pre-election period;

3. regulation of usage of administrative resources – restrictions on the usage of administrative resources shall go in force from June 1 of the Election Year; [according to the legislative proposal] the number of people, who shall not have right to participate in the election campaign, will increase; the activities of the officials from public law legal entities, regional and local governmental agencies will be regulated during the election campaign; propaganda in favor of any candidate during the events/presentations organized with state/local budget is prohibited; more accurate regulations and clear restriction for the usage of budget resources will be worked out; the responsibilities of the local self-governmental bodies and election commissions, standards of transparency of their activities and sanctions for the violation of these obligations will be further cleared up.

4. Ensuring media-equality for all political parties during the election period: definition of secret advertisement was clarified; the rules for the release of social, paid and free political ads, obligatory discussion and response to media-monitoring results carried out by Georgian and international organizations from the Communication Regulation Commission, rules for organizing debates and providing information about ongoing

election procedures will be worked out.

5. Authorities of the Georgian Communication National Commission in estimating broadcasting transit, copyright and neighboring rights were worked out - according to the proposal, the cable network operators will be entitled to re-transmit TV-signals of Georgian Public Broadcaster, Community broadcaster and satellite broadcasters. Simultaneously, the Broadcaster is held responsible to sell its right to retransmission to cable operators without monopolist prices on the market and other conditions which can unlawfully breach the balance on the broadcasting market.

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On February 13, non-governmental organizations working on electoral issues and media entities formally launched This Affects You campaign, which aims to improve the electoral legislation and environment. As part of the campaign, around 170 NGOs and media entities, as well as 1500 individuals, signed a petition calling for amendments to the electoral legislation. The petition was presented to Parliament on February 17 along with a package of legislative proposals. Organizers of the campaign met with the population in Tbilisi and 8 cities of Georgia and informed citizens about the restrictions imposed by law of Political Union of Citizens. Participants of the campaign distributed materials with respective information among citizens. The proposals were also submitted to the diplomatic corps, international organizations and political parties. Negotiations of legislative proposals continued a month in the Parliament. The law on Political Union of Citizens was adopted on March 31 by the first hearing and on April 25 by the second hearing in the Parliament, the third hearing is planned in the next week. On March 9 an appeal for inviting OSCE/ODIHR long-term Election Observation Mission to Georgia was submitted to the Administration of the President, Parliament and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia with a view to ensure quality and impartial monitoring throughout the whole election period, rather than only for two months in election period.