

# საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



## **“This Affects You” submits new legislative proposals to international organizations and political parties**



Today, in hotel “Courtyard Marriott” participant NGOs and media organizations of the campaign “This Affects You” arranged a round table and introduced to international organizations and political parties the package of pending

amendments to the Election Code. Representative of diplomatic corps and international organizations, state authorities, member of parliamentary and non-parliamentary opposition, as well as NGOs and media organizations were invited at the round table.

At the meeting, authors of the legislative initiative discussed the gaps of the applicable legislation and submitted their proposals in details, which, in their opinion, will ensure development of the election day procedures, equal media coverage for election subjects in pre-election period and unrestricted broadcasting by cable operators and will improve media and election environment in the country.

On May 7, member nongovernmental and media organizations of the campaign “This Affects You” submitted to the Parliament of Georgia the new legislative proposals on introducing of amendments to the Election Code of Georgia and certain legislative acts.

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 opened 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 (live stream);
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 hidden 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 were also defined.

5. Equal access to outdoor advertisement – The rules and procedures of outdoor advertisement in pre - election period and the mechanisms excluding monopolization of outdoor advertisement by one election subject was specified. The rule for establishing taxes on outdoor advertisement in pre-election campaign had also been specified.

6. Transparency of advertisement expenses in administrative and state organs - The concept of advertisement expenses was defined. Sanctions were imposed by the administrative organ for violation of transparency principle established as per article 33(1) of this law. The rule and the periods, according to which the administrative organs should disclose incurred expenses on advertisement, was specified.

7. 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.