

A. Altman for the Elections Commission

The Enlighten Party brought two violations against the Uplift Party for violating campaigning rules enforced prior to an election. Pursuant to ch. 701.1 of the Florida State University Elections Statutes, “campaigning” is defined as “[t]he distribution or use of campaign materials, the publicizing or solicitation of support for or against a ballot item, political party, or candidate for an elected office of the Student Body, and calling forth the action to vote or support. Campaigning shall begin the Wednesday at 12 a.m., one week prior to the Election Day. The calling forth the action to vote is defined as “publicizing the name of or likeness of any candidate, publicizing the place, time, or manner of voting, or the use of the word ‘vote.’” (Ch. 714.1(J)) Additionally, campaigning inside of university owned libraries, dining halls, and the dining establishments located in the Union is strictly prohibited. (Ch. 714.1(I)) Political parties are also prohibited from campaigning within the designated “no campaign zones” on election day.

The first violation brought by the Enlighten Party alleged the Uplift Party was illegally campaigning in the Thagard Building on election day. To prove this, the Enlighten Party provided a video of an individual whose face was completely covered by a superimposed cloud. The individual’s words were slightly mumbled but Elections Commissioners were able to hear the words “Uplift Party” stated at one point. The Elections Commission was not able to determine based on the evidence presented that the individual speaking in the video was a member of the Uplift Party or that the individual was campaigning pursuant to the above detailed definition. As a result, this claim was dismissed by the Elections Commission.

The second violation brought by the Enlighten Party alleged the Uplift Party was illegally campaigning in Residence Halls and Academic Buildings on election day. The Enlighten Party provided various pictures of the backs of two individuals wearing bright orange shirts, which are the same color of shirt associated with the Uplift Party. In one picture, one of the individuals can be seen carrying a cooler. In another picture, one of the individuals can be seen speaking with another person allegedly sitting outside of the HCB Classroom Building. The individuals of the Uplift Party were allegedly exchanging food for votes; however, this was not depicted in the pictures presented. Ultimately, the Elections Commission dismissed the claim because the evidence presented did not prove that the individuals in the pictures were members of the Uplift Party or that they were illegally campaigning.

The Enlighten Party also brought an appeal of the election results based on the above claims of illegal campaigning. The Elections Commission found there was no illegal campaigning by the Uplift Party and thus that was not a valid ground to contest the elections results.