The tobacco industry-funded opposition to Measure 4 is running a misleading campaign that is a blatant violation of North Dakota Century Code.

16.1-10-04 states: “A person is guilty of a class A misdemeanor if that person knowingly, or with reckless disregard for its truth or falsity, publishes any political advertisement or news release that contains any assertion, representation, or statement of fact, including information concerning a candidate’s prior public record, which is untrue, deceptive, or misleading . . .”

Mike Rud and North Dakotans Against the 400% Tax Increase have deliberately and repeatedly misled North Dakota voters about Measure 4 in the following ways:

- **Omitting the word “tobacco” from the majority of their campaign materials** – Measure 4 is a proposed increase on North Dakota’s tobacco tax, so it is essential to include the term “tobacco” in any discussion of the measure. Instead, the opposition is misleading people into thinking they are being burdened with a 400% property tax or income tax increase. It’s the only way they can trick North Dakotans into voting to protect tobacco companies’ profits.

- **Claiming Measure 4 a $70 million tax hike** – The North Dakota Tax Department estimates Measure 4 will generate approximately $141.7 million for the 2017-2019 biennium. However, that revenue is entirely dependent on tobacco sales. The opposition’s misleading messaging implies that the state is increasing taxes by $70 million per year and all ND taxpayers are on the hook for the increase, which is absolutely false.

- **Attacking the Administrative Committee on Veterans Affairs** – The opposition’s website falsely attacks ACOVA as “wracked with recent scandal and mismanagement.” They are making baseless accusations that are simply untrue.

- Not only are these tactics misleading, they’re illegal.

“The tobacco companies behind the opposition are convicted racketeers, so it’s no surprise they’re trying to deceive and mislead the public,” said Dr. Eric Johnson, Raise it for Health ND chair. “The opposition’s campaign follows a deliberate pattern of misleading voters that violates North Dakota election law, and demonstrates a complete lack of respect for the integrity of our electoral process.”

Raise it for Health ND is filing a complaint with the Bismarck Police Department.

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