

## Supreme Court Rules In Favor Of Group Seeking To Overturn ‘Anti-Lying’ Campaign Law

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In what is being hailed as a triumph for free speech, the Supreme Court [ruled unanimously](#) in favor of pro-life advocacy group Susan B. Anthony List (SBA List) on Monday. SBL was challenging the legality of an Ohio law that criminalizes lying about candidates for office during campaign season.

The group first ran afoul of the law in 2010, when they announced their intention to purchase a billboard accusing Democratic Rep. Steve Driehaus of voting to support “taxpayer-funded abortions” with his vote in favor of Obamacare. The Driehaus campaign disagreed, filing a complaint with the Ohio Elections Board and getting the billboard company to refuse to run the ad by threatening to sue. Concerned about granting states the discretion to determine what constitutes true and false political speech, and considering the law a violation of First Amendment protections, SBA List has been working to get the law overturned ever since.

Monday’s ruling merely grants the group standing to sue Ohio over the law, although [in his ruling](#) Justice Clarence Thomas noted that “Denying prompt judicial review would impose a substantial hardship on petitioners, forcing them to choose between refraining from core political speech on the one hand, or engaging in that speech and risking costly commission proceedings and criminal prosecution on the other.”

“Today’s decision by the court is a step toward victory for the freedom of speech and the broad coalition of groups who have supported SBA List throughout this case,” said SBA List President [Marjorie Dannenfelser](#). “The truth or falsity of political speech should be judged by voters, not government bureaucrats.”

Political satirist P.J. O’Rourke, alongside the libertarian Cato Institute, memorably filed a brief supporting SBA List [“in defense of truthiness,”](#) arguing that spin, smear, and satire “are as politically important as their factually pure counterparts,” and that “laws like Ohio’s here, which criminalize ‘false’ speech, do not replace truthiness, satire, and snark with high-minded ideas and ‘just the facts.’ Instead, they chill speech such that spin becomes silence.”

