

## The Truth in Advertising Act of 2014 (H.R. 4341)

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**Request for Members of Congress:** The EDC urges you to cosponsor the Truth in Advertising Act of 2014 (H.R. 4341), a bipartisan bill instructing the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to report on recommendations for a regulatory framework on advertising that uses post-production techniques, such as "photoshop," to materially change the faces and bodies of people within the advertisements.

**Why Support This Bill? The Problem and The Facts:** Advertisements that feature people whose image has been materially altered are deceptive and **linked to consumer harm** including emotional, mental and physical health consequences and eating disorders, particularly amongst children, girls and women.

### **Consider These Statistics:**

- Three of the most common mental health problems among girls (eating disorders, depression and depressed mood/self-esteem) are linked to media's representations of women and girls.
- 42% of girls in 1st through 3rd grades want to be thinner.
- 51% of girls aged 9 -10 feel better about themselves when they are dieting.
- 53% of 13 year-old girls are unhappy with their bodies; 78% of 17 year-old girls are unhappy with their bodies.
- 80% of women feel worse about themselves after seeing a beauty advertisement.
- **In June 2011, the American Medical Association (AMA)** announced a new policy to discourage the rampant use of "photoshopping" by advertisers, citing the connection between the practice of altering images of bodies in advertising, the subsequent distribution of altered/unrealistic images, and adolescent health problems: *"Advertisers commonly alter photographs to enhance the appearance of models' bodies, and such alterations can contribute to unrealistic expectations of appropriate body image - especially among impressionable children and adolescents. **A large body of literature links exposure to media- propagated images of unrealistic body image to eating disorders and other child and adolescent health problems.**"* The AMA policy further encouraged the development of guidelines for advertisements that, "...discourage the altering of photographs in a manner that could promote unrealistic expectations of appropriate body image."

### **The Solution? Pass the Truth in Advertising Act of 2014.**

H.R. 4341 is a bill is a "no cost" bill. H.R. 4341 only affects advertising, not editorial or art content (e.g. the shampoo ad in a magazine not the cover of the magazine) and thus protects the First Amendment. **Specifically, the Truth in Advertising Act of 2014 instructs the FTC to do three things:**

1. Report recommendations for regulatory framework, for the use in advertising and other media for the promotion of commercial products, of images that have been altered to materially change the physical characteristics of the face and bodies of the individuals depicted, for the purposes of making such images more aesthetically appealing to consumers;
2. Consult with the Director of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in issuing the report, with a proposed strategy and recommendations for this regulatory framework;
3. Consult with a group of stakeholders that is geographically diverse and includes representatives from a broad cross-section of different types of stakeholders such as the American Medical Association, the American Association of Advertising Agencies, and the Eating Disorders Coalition.

### **To become a cosponsor, please contact:**

Nathan in Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen's office: [nathan.gately@mail.house.gov](mailto:nathan.gately@mail.house.gov)

or

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