

Stamping Political Messages on Money is Legal

Alan Levine, Esq. noted constitutional lawyer and professor, whose expertise in First Amendment law has extended to courts and cases across the nation and to the United States Supreme Court, has rendered a legal opinion which is summarized below:

- **IT IS NOT ILLEGAL TO STAMP, USE, DEPOSIT OR ACCEPT MONEY WITH A POLITICAL MESSAGE**
- **To stamp paper money with a political message, such as “Stamp Money Out of Politics,” is a form of free speech protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.**
- While federal law makes it a crime to “deface” paper money, 18 USC 333, that law applies only when there is an “intent” to make the bills “unfit” for further circulation. People who stamp bills with a political message do not have such an intent, since their point is to have their message continuously circulated among those who spend and receive the bills. So long as the stamping is done in a way that does not render the information on the bill illegible, then it remains fit for further circulation, and the law has not been violated.
- Since the inception of the Stampede in 2013, no one has been prosecuted for stamping money with Stampede stamps.
- Since no crime has been committed by the use of Stampede stamps, no crime is committed by spending or depositing bills that have been augmented with a Stampede stamp. Similarly, no crime is committed by a merchant who accepts those bills or a financial institution that receives them.