

6-25-2012

## Newsroom: Goldstein on 'Anti-Lying' Law

Roger Williams University School of Law

Follow this and additional works at: [https://docs.rwu.edu/law\\_archives\\_life](https://docs.rwu.edu/law_archives_life)

---

### Recommended Citation

Roger Williams University School of Law, "Newsroom: Goldstein on 'Anti-Lying' Law" (2012). *Life of the Law School (1993- )*. 304.  
[https://docs.rwu.edu/law\\_archives\\_life/304](https://docs.rwu.edu/law_archives_life/304)

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Archives & Law School History at DOCS@RWU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Life of the Law School (1993- ) by an authorized administrator of DOCS@RWU. For more information, please contact [mwu@rwu.edu](mailto:mwu@rwu.edu).

# Newsroom

## Goldstein on 'Anti-Lying' Law

Cited as a source by the ProJo's PolitiFact column, Professor Jared Goldstein weighs in on a Rhode Island law that appears to make lying a misdemeanor.

**From the PROVIDENCE JOURNAL:** "[You are now, mostly, free to lie on the Internet](#)" by C. EUGENE EMERY JR. JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

**June 25, 2012:** [...] previously, you could have faced misdemeanor charges in Rhode Island, if you believe state Rep. Christopher Blazewski, a Providence Democrat. On June 12, he told the Rhode Island House that it was illegal to transmit a lie on the Internet, on radio, on TV, or over the phone about anything.



[...] **Jared Goldstein, a law professor at Roger**

**Williams University School of Law, said** the plain language of the law did “indeed appear to make it a crime to knowingly or intentionally send any false information over the Internet, without any limitation on the context or subject matter. If read literally, the language would seem to cover giving false information on a dating site. Or lying to a friend in an e-mail message. Or maybe even clicking ‘Like’ for a friend’s photo that you don’t really like.

“If the provision is read in that literal way,” **he said**, “it would almost certainly be unconstitutionally overbroad because it would prohibit a huge amount of constitutionally-protected speech. Even if it is not

read that way, but construed narrowly to cover only false information that can constitutionally be prohibited, the law may still be unconstitutionally vague, because it doesn't clearly tell the public what is prohibited." [...]

*For full story, click [here](#).* □