

2025 -- H 5300 SUBSTITUTE A

LC001107/SUB A

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

A N A C T

RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES -- THREATS AND EXTORTION

Introduced By: Representatives Dawson, Shanley, Kazarian, Furtado, and Boylan

Date Introduced: February 05, 2025

Referred To: House Judiciary

(Secretary of State)

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 11-42-4 of the General Laws in Chapter 11-42 entitled "Threats and
2 Extortion" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **11-42-4. Threats to public officials.**

4 (a) Whoever knowingly and willfully delivers or conveys, directly or indirectly, a verbal
5 or written threat to take the life of, or to inflict bodily harm upon, a public official or a member of
6 his or her immediate family because of the performance or nonperformance of some public duty;
7 because of hostility of the person making the threat toward the status or position of the public
8 official; or because of some other factor related to the official’s public existence, shall be guilty of
9 a felony and shall be imprisoned for not more than five (5) years, or fined not more than five
10 thousand dollars (\$5,000), or both.

11 **(b) Whoever knowingly and willfully delivers or conveys, directly or indirectly, a verbal**
12 **or written threat to take the life of, or to inflict bodily harm upon, any election official, or a member**
13 **of his or her immediate family because of the performance or nonperformance of their public duty;**
14 **because of hostility of the person making the threat toward the status or position of the election**
15 **official; or because of some other factor related to the election official’s public existence, shall be**
16 **guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be imprisoned for not more than one year, or fined not more than**
17 **one thousand dollars (\$1,000), or both.**

18 ~~(b)~~(c) For purposes of this section:

19 (1) “Public official” means a person who is elected or appointed to office in accordance

1 with the constitution, a statute, or a city or town charter, or who is a judge, magistrate, assistant
2 attorney general, special assistant attorney general, or law enforcement officer, or in the case of an
3 elective office, any person who has filed the required documents for nomination or election to that
4 office or who is appointed by the governor to serve as the director or his or her designee of a state
5 department that is established and the qualifications and duties of which are prescribed by statute
6 to discharge a public duty for the state of Rhode Island;

7 (2) "Election official" means a person who is appointed, hired or assigned to any polling
8 place and includes, but is not limited to, any poll worker, election worker, warden, moderator, clerk,
9 and any member of the board of canvassers, in accordance with any statute, town charter or
10 ordinance and whose qualifications and duties are prescribed by statute, town charter or ordinance;

11 ~~(2)~~(3) "Immediate family" means a public official's spouse, child, or children.

12 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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- 1 This act would make threats to election officials, to include election workers, poll workers,
2 wardens, moderators and the board of canvassers, a misdemeanor.
3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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