

# SENATE BILL 956

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2lr3178  
CF HB 1409

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By: Senator Watson

Introduced and read first time: February 14, 2022

Assigned to: Rules

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

### 2 **Criminal Law – Threats to Public Officials**

3 FOR the purpose of adding health officers, election administrators, and public employees  
4 responsible for inspecting and enforcing housing and building codes and standards  
5 to the list of public officials against whom it is illegal to make certain threats; and  
6 generally relating to the prohibition on making or sending threats to public officials.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

8 Article – Criminal Law

9 Section 3–708

10 Annotated Code of Maryland

11 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

13 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

### 14 **Article – Criminal Law**

15 3–708.

16 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

17 (2) “Local official” means an individual serving in a publicly elected office  
18 of a local government unit, as defined in § 10–101 of the State Government Article.

19 (3) (i) “State official” has the meaning stated in § 5–101 of the General  
20 Provisions Article.

21 (ii) “State official” includes the Governor, Governor–elect,  
22 Lieutenant Governor, and Lieutenant Governor–elect.

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (4) "Threat" includes:

2 (i) an oral threat; or

3 (ii) a threat in any written form, whether or not the writing is signed,  
4 or if the writing is signed, whether or not it is signed with a fictitious name or any other  
5 mark.

6 (b) A person may not knowingly and willfully make a threat to take the life of,  
7 kidnap, or cause physical injury to:

8 (1) a State official[,];

9 (2) a local official[,];

10 (3) a deputy State's Attorney[,];

11 (4) an assistant State's Attorney[, or];

12 (5) an assistant Public Defender;

13 (6) **A HEALTH OFFICER;**

14 (7) **AN ELECTION ADMINISTRATOR; OR**

15 (8) **A PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBLE FOR INSPECTING AND**  
16 **ENFORCING HOUSING AND BUILDING CODES AND STANDARDS.**

17 (c) A person may not knowingly send, deliver, part with, or make for the purpose  
18 of sending or delivering a threat prohibited under subsection (b) of this section.

19 (d) A person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction  
20 is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or a fine not exceeding \$2,500 or both.

21 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June  
22 1, 2022.