

# SENATE BILL 480

G1

EMERGENCY BILL  
ENROLLED BILL

(4lr4582)

— *Education, Energy, and the Environment/Judiciary* —

Introduced by **The President (By Request – Administration) and Senators Bailey, Beidle, Brooks, Charles, Corderman, Elfreth, Gile, Hettleman, Lam, McKay, Rosapepe, Salling, Waldstreicher, M. Washington, West, ~~and Zucker~~ Zucker, and Kagan**

Read and Examined by Proofreaders:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Proofreader.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Proofreader.

Sealed with the Great Seal and presented to the Governor, for his approval this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock, \_\_\_\_\_ M.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President.

CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Protecting Election Officials Act of 2024**

3 FOR the purpose of prohibiting a person from knowingly and willfully making a threat to  
4 harm an election official or an immediate family member of an election official  
5 because of the election official's role in administering the election process; and  
6 generally relating to prohibiting threats against election officials and their  
7 immediate family members.

8 BY adding to  
9 Article – Election Law  
10 Section 16–904  
11 Annotated Code of Maryland

---

**EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.**

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.

*Italics indicate opposite chamber/conference committee amendments.*



(2022 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

**Article – Election Law**

**16-904.**

(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
INDICATED.

(2) (I) “ELECTION OFFICIAL” MEANS:

~~(I)~~ 1. THE STATE ADMINISTRATOR;

~~(II)~~ 2. A MEMBER OF THE STATE BOARD;

~~(III)~~ 3. AN EMPLOYEE OF THE STATE BOARD;

4. COUNSEL TO THE STATE BOARD;

~~(IV)~~ ~~4.~~ 5. A COUNTY ELECTION DIRECTOR APPOINTED UNDER §  
2-202 OF THIS ARTICLE;

~~(V)~~ ~~5.~~ 6. A MEMBER OF A LOCAL BOARD;

~~(VI)~~ ~~6.~~ 7. AN EMPLOYEE OF A LOCAL BOARD; ~~OR~~

8. COUNSEL TO A LOCAL BOARD; OR

~~(VII)~~ ~~7.~~ 9. AN ELECTION JUDGE.

(II) “ELECTION OFFICIAL” INCLUDES:

~~1.~~ AN INDIVIDUAL WHO TAKES THE OATH PRESCRIBED  
IN ARTICLE I, § 9 OF THE MARYLAND CONSTITUTION TO ASSIST IN ADMINISTERING  
AN ELECTION; AND

~~2.~~ A PAGE AS DEFINED IN § 10-401 OF THIS ARTICLE.

(3) “ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN §  
3-805 OF THE CRIMINAL LAW ARTICLE.

(4) “HARM” INCLUDES:

1 (I) SERIOUS INJURY; AND

2 (II) SERIOUS EMOTIONAL DISTRESS.

3 (5) "IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBER" INCLUDES:

4 (I) A PARENT;

5 (II) A SPOUSE; AND

6 (III) A CHILD.

7 (6) "THREAT" INCLUDES:

8 (I) AN ORAL THREAT;

9 (II) A THREAT MADE BY ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION; AND

10 (III) A THREAT IN ANY WRITTEN FORM, WHETHER OR NOT THE  
11 WRITING IS SIGNED, OR IF THE WRITING IS SIGNED, WHETHER OR NOT IT IS SIGNED  
12 WITH A FICTITIOUS NAME OR ANY OTHER MARK.

13 (B) A PERSON MAY NOT KNOWINGLY AND WILLFULLY MAKE A THREAT TO  
14 HARM AN ELECTION OFFICIAL OR AN IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBER OF AN ELECTION  
15 OFFICIAL BECAUSE OF THE ELECTION OFFICIAL'S ROLE IN ADMINISTERING THE  
16 ELECTION PROCESS.

17 (C) A PERSON MAY NOT KNOWINGLY SEND, DELIVER, PART WITH, OR MAKE  
18 FOR THE PURPOSE OF SENDING OR DELIVERING A THREAT PROHIBITED UNDER  
19 SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION.

20 (D) A PERSON WHO VIOLATES THIS SECTION IS GUILTY OF A MISDEMEANOR  
21 AND ON CONVICTION IS SUBJECT TO IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 3 YEARS OR A  
22 FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$2,500 OR BOTH.

23 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act ~~shall take effect June~~  
24 ~~1, 2024~~ is an emergency measure, is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public  
25 health or safety, has been passed by a yea and nay vote supported by three-fifths of all the  
26 members elected to each of the two Houses of the General Assembly, and shall take effect  
27 from the date it is enacted.