

HOUSE BILL 631

E1

6lr2326

By: **Delegate Schindler**

Introduced and read first time: January 30, 2026

Assigned to: Judiciary

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Criminal Law – Threats Against State or Local Official – Penalties**

3 FOR the purpose of increasing the penalties for a violation of the prohibition against
4 making certain threats against a State official, a local official, a deputy State’s
5 Attorney, an assistant State’s Attorney, or an assistant Public Defender; and
6 generally relating to threats made against 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 2025 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.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(4) “Threat” includes:

(i) an oral threat; or

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

(b) A person may not knowingly and willfully make a threat to take the life of, kidnap, or cause physical injury to a State official, a local official, a deputy State’s Attorney, an assistant State’s Attorney, or an assistant Public Defender.

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

(d) A person who violates this section is guilty of a ~~[misdemeanor]~~ **FELONY** and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding ~~[3]~~ **10** years or a fine not exceeding ~~[\$2,500]~~ **\$5,000** or both.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2026.