

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Testimony: Protecting Election Officials Act of 2024

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: February 21, 2024

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Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund

On behalf of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network Action Fund, we stand in strong support of the Protecting Election Officials Act of 2024 (HB 0585/SB 0480), which addresses threats against election officials in Maryland. Safeguarding these officials and their families from harm is crucial for maintaining the integrity of our democratic process, a principle our organization deeply values.

Senate Bill 480 aims to deter and penalize individuals who knowingly and willfully make threats to harm election officials or their immediate family members. This bill covers a wide spectrum of threats, whether oral, electronic, or written, regardless of whether they are signed or anonymous. By explicitly prohibiting such behavior and outlining consequences for offenders, this legislation sends a clear message that intimidation and violence against those entrusted with administering elections will not be tolerated.

Election officials serve as guardians of our democratic principles, entrusted with the solemn duty of upholding the integrity and fairness of our electoral system. Their diligent work behind the scenes ensures that every vote counts and accurately reflects the voice of the people in election outcomes. Without their dedication and vigilance, the very foundation of our democracy would be at risk.

It is essential that these public servants can carry out their duties without fear of retaliation or harm. Threats and intimidation not only endanger the individuals targeted but also undermine the entire electoral process, casting doubt and eroding public trust in its integrity.

Senate Bill 480 represents a critical measure in safeguarding the well-being of election officials and their families. By establishing clear prohibitions and penalties for those who attempt to intimidate or harm these dedicated individuals, Maryland can send a strong message that such actions will not be tolerated. This proactive approach not only protects those who serve our democracy but also upholds the fundamental principles of fairness, transparency, and accountability that underpin our electoral system.



By supporting Senate Bill 480, Maryland demonstrates its commitment to preserving the sanctity of our elections and ensuring that those who devote themselves to this essential public service can do so without fear or interference. This legislation reaffirms our collective belief in the importance of safeguarding the democratic process and underscores our shared responsibility to defend the institutions that protect our freedoms and rights.

I urge you to support Senate Bill 480 and its efforts to protect election officials and their families. Thank you for your attention to this vital issue.

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