



The Senate of Maryland ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SB 311 - "Government Officials' Family Protection Act of 2025"

I am Senator Bryan Simonaire presenting SB 311.

As you know last year, the **senate unanimously passed** SB 480 that provided protections for election workers and their immediate family due to the rise of threats against election workers.

Sadly, while we provided protection for election worker's families, our **elected official families** do not receive the same protections.

It **may not surprise you**, but **threats** to elected officials and their families have increased as well, and most notably in the last couple years.

But is it not just happening nationally - According to the State of MD:

During the period between 2014-2022: threats reported did not exceed 10.

During the years from 2023 – 2024: There were 21 reported threats with 2 threats against family members.

This bill aims to provide the **same protections** that we give to election worker's families to elected official's families.

This is **accomplished by** altering the existing elected official protections in Criminal Law 3–708 to include protections for immediate family members.

In fact, the '*immediate family*' language used in this bill is **word for word** from last years' bill as it applied to election workers.

That means protections for your parents, your spouse and your children.

Sadly, more and more families are being **drawn into a world of violence** they never should have to experience.

Politics has changed since I came in the Senate in 2007.

People are **more emboldened** to threaten elected officials and their families.

To be clear: Current protections for elected officials **do not include** protections for their immediate family members.

It would be **hard to justify** protecting an election worker's immediate family member from threats **but deny those same protections** to an elected officials' family member.

I firmly believe elected officials who are performing a public service and are often the target of threats deserve to have those same protections extended to their family members who, at times, are drawn into **threats simply by association**.

The **General Assembly** has seen an increase in serious threats to individuals and collectively as a body. Just within the last year, this body has received several bomb threats requiring evacuation of the whole complex.

Threats have increased locally as well. For example, in the last 3 years, **Anne Arundel County** had a **total of 24 threats against** their local elected officials.

We **cannot wait for a threat to become a reality** against our family members. We need to act just as decisively as we did last year and provide protections for elected official's family members as we did for election workers and their family members.

I ask for your favorable consideration.