

2024 -- H 8223

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LC005740
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

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A N A C T

RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES -- THREATS AND EXTORTION

Introduced By: Representatives Vella-Wilkinson, Batista, Shanley, Lima, Noret, and
Perez

Date Introduced: May 01, 2024

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 11-42-4 of the General Laws in Chapter 11-42 entitled "Threats and
2 Extortion" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **11-42-4. Threats to public officials.**

4 (a) Whoever knowingly and willfully delivers or conveys, directly or indirectly, a verbal
5 or written threat to take the life of, or to inflict bodily harm upon, a public official or a member of
6 his or her immediate family because of the performance or nonperformance of some public duty;
7 because of hostility of the person making the threat toward the status or position of the public
8 official; or because of some other factor related to the official's public existence, shall be guilty of
9 a felony and shall be imprisoned for not more than five (5) years, or fined not more than five
10 thousand dollars (\$5,000), or both.

11 (b) For purposes of this section:

12 (1) "Public official" means a person who is elected or appointed to office in accordance
13 with the constitution, a statute, or a city or town charter, [or who is a state government caseworker](#)
14 [or investigator](#), or who is a judge, magistrate, assistant attorney general, special assistant attorney
15 general, or law enforcement officer, or in the case of an elective office, any person who has filed
16 the required documents for nomination or election to that office or who is appointed by the governor
17 to serve as the director or his or her designee of a state department that is established and the
18 qualifications and duties of which are prescribed by statute to discharge a public duty for the state
19 of Rhode Island;

1 (2) "Immediate family" means a public official's spouse, child, or children.

2 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES -- THREATS AND EXTORTION

- 1 This act would consider state government caseworkers or investigators "public officials"
- 2 for purposes of the prohibition on making threats to public officials.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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