

March 11, 2025

The Honorable Robert E. Craven, Sr.
Chair, House Municipal Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: BILL NUMBER H-5300 – RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES -- THREATS AND EXTORTION

Dear Chairman Craven and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, I write to express our support for House Bill 5300, which seeks to classify election officials and poll workers as "public officials" under the existing legal protections against threats and intimidation. The League stands in unison with our affiliate members, the Rhode Island Town and City Clerks Association (RITCCA), as well as the Rhode Island Secretary of State's Office, advocating for the passage of this important legislation.

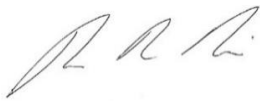
Rhode Island's election officials and poll workers serve a vital role in maintaining the integrity and accessibility of our democratic process. These individuals dedicate their time and efforts to ensuring that elections are conducted fairly, efficiently, and securely. However, in recent years, there has been an alarming increase in instances of threats, harassment, and intimidation directed at election officials nationwide. Protecting these public servants is essential to upholding the fundamental principles of our democracy.

By amending the definition of "public official" to explicitly include election officials and poll workers, House Bill 5300 would reinforce the message that Rhode Island does not tolerate threats or acts of intimidation against those who administer our elections. This measure will provide these individuals with the legal protections they deserve and ensure that they can perform their duties without fear of their safety.

The League urges the committee to advance this legislation, recognizing the critical role that election officials and poll workers play in preserving public trust in our electoral system. We appreciate your time and consideration of this important issue, and we respectfully request your support for House Bill 5300.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to safeguarding our democratic institutions.

Sincerely,



Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Judiciary Committee