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From: siivia.stipic <siivia.stipic@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 7, 2026 9:21 AM
To: House Judiciary Committee
Cc: Rep. Noret, Thomas E.; Rep. Handy, Arthur
Subject: Support for House Bill LC004374 – Protection of School Employees and Election Officials

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Date: April 7, 2026

To: House Judiciary Clerk HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov

Rep. Arthur Handy rep-handy@rilegislature.gov

Rep. Thomas Noret rep-noret@rilegislature.gov

Dear Clerk and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

My name is Silvia Stipic, and I am a resident of District 18, Cranston, Rhode Island. I am writing to express my strong support for **House Bill LC004374**, introduced by Representatives Noret, Cortvriend, Speakman, and others, which amends the state's laws regarding threats and extortion.

This legislation is a necessary and timely step to ensure the safety and security of those who serve our public institutions, particularly our educators and election workers.

I specifically support this bill for the following reasons:

1. **Protection for Educators:** By expanding the definition of "public official" to include school superintendents, principals, and all school employees, this bill acknowledges the vital role educators play in our society. Teachers and school staff face increasing levels of harassment and intimidation, often related to their professional duties. Including them in this criminal statute sends a clear message that threatening the safety of those who educate our children will not be tolerated.
2. **Clarity on Age Requirements:** The provision stating that suspects must be 18 or older to be charged under this section for threats against school employees ensures that the justice system handles juvenile matters appropriately while still holding adults accountable for endangering our schools.
3. **Safeguarding Democracy:** The bill also reinforces protections for election officials, recognizing that those who administer our elections must be able to perform their duties without fear of violence or intimidation against themselves or their families.

In an era where public servants, from poll workers to teachers, face unprecedented hostility, Rhode Island must lead by example. This bill provides essential legal tools to protect the individuals who keep our schools running and our elections secure.

I urge the House Judiciary Committee to review this bill favorably and recommend its passage to the full House. Protecting the safety of our public servants is fundamental to maintaining a functional and safe society.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Silvia Stipic, Cranston, Rhode Island