



February 26, 2024

The Honorable Robert E. Craven
Chairman, House Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: House Bill Number: H7447 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 am writing to express our support for House Legislation H7447, which recognizes the invaluable contributions of election officials and poll workers in our democratic process, sponsored by Representative Matthew S. Dawson.

Election officials are the backbone of our democracy, serving year-round to oversee every aspect of the electoral process. Whether elected, appointed, or hired, these individuals fulfill essential duties such as maintaining voter rolls, preparing training materials, securing voting equipment, and recruiting and supervising poll workers. Their commitment to upholding the principles of democracy is evident in their unwavering dedication to their roles.

In recent years, election officials, staff, and poll workers have faced unprecedented challenges that not only undermine the integrity of our electoral process but also jeopardize the safety and well-being of those who serve our communities.

Since 2020, 14 states have enacted laws specifically addressing protections for election officials and poll workers, reflecting a growing recognition of the need to safeguard these individuals. While public officials and public servants have long been protected by law from threats, intimidation, and harassment, there has been a growing recognition of the need to extend similar protections to those who administer elections.

By supporting House Bill H7447, we can demonstrate our commitment to protecting the integrity of our electoral process and ensuring the safety and well-being of election officials, staff, and poll workers. I urge you to consider the importance of this legislation and to lend your support to its passage.

On behalf of the League of Cities and Towns thank you for allowing me the opportunity to express our views
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David M. Bodah".

David M. Bodah
Associate Director

Cc: Representative Carol Hagan McEntee, First Vice Chair
Representative Jason Knight, Second Vice Chair
House Judiciary Members
Ernie Almonte, Executive Director, RILCT