

SB 1530 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Rules

Prepared By: Tisha Pascone

Meeting Dates: 2/26

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure adds threatening a public official to the crime of aggravated harassment if the person intentionally subjects the official to alarm by conveying, to the public official or their family, a threat to inflict serious physical injury on them or their family. The measure limits the crime to threats intended to cause alarm, could reasonably be expected to cause alarm, and were conveyed because of the official's performance or nonperformance of a public duty, the official's status or position, or any other factor related to the official's office or duties. The measure declares an emergency, effective on its passage.

FISCAL: Fiscal impact issued

REVENUE: No revenue impact

SENATE VOTE: Ayes, 18; Nays, 11

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In a 2024 report, the [Combating Terrorism Center at West Point notes](#) that the number of federal charges for threatening public officials has increased in recent years, from an average of 38 per year in 2013–2016 to 62 per year in 2017–2022. A [2024 Brennan Center report](#) finds that 43 percent of state legislators had experienced threats, affecting some officeholders' willingness to continue service, address certain topics, or hold public events.

Prior enacted Oregon legislation addressing this issue limited the public's access to residential addresses for certain public officials, requiring them to be included in documents filed with the Secretary of State or in its voter registration system, except through a public records request. This includes House Bill 3073 (2023) for candidates for public office and Senate Bill 224 (2025) for individuals associated with a candidate's principal campaign committee, political committee, or petition committee, starting in 2027. House Bill 4144 (2022) allowed election workers to exempt their residential addresses from public record disclosure. Senate Bill 473 (2025) (not enacted), as introduced, would have created a standalone crime of threatening a public official, while Senate Bill 1530 would add threatening a public official to the crime of aggravated harassment, a Class C felony.

The term "alarm" is also used in the crime of harassment. To prevent its application to speech protected by Article I, Section 8, of the Oregon Constitution, the Oregon Supreme Court has interpreted that use of "alarm" to mean "more than mere inconvenience or feelings of anguish which are the result of angry or imposing words; it means being placed in actual fear or terror resulting from a sudden sense of danger" because of a threat "so unambiguous, unequivocal and specific to the addressee that" the threat is "objectively likely to be followed by unlawful acts" (see *State v. Moyle*, 299 Or. 691 (1985)).