

Election Worker and Polling Place Protection Act

Background:

Election workers are the foundation of free and fair elections. They ensure that elections are administered smoothly and in accordance with the law. Yet in the wake of the 2020 election, threats and harassment directed at election workers, their families, and others involved in election administration rose to unprecedented levels. They have been targeted by death threats, racial slurs and other harassment in person, over the phone and on social media. These threats are driving many election workers to quit or retire early, leading to vacancies in critical positions.

A *Reuters* [special report](#) found disturbing cases of violent threats toward election officials on the rise nationwide, fueled by the continued “Big Lie” about the 2020 election. Another *Reuters* [report](#) identified more than 100 threats of death or violence made to U.S. election workers and officials during the 2020 election, yet as of September 2021, there had been only four known arrests and no convictions.

Polling places have also become targets. During the 2020 election, polling locations around the country received bomb threats and other threats of violence.

Election Worker and Polling Place Protection Act:

The *Election Worker and Polling Place Protection Act* would expand and clarify protections for election workers against the threat of harassment and violence, as well as for polling places and other election infrastructure.

Specifically, the bill would amend the federal criminal code (18 U.S.C. § 245) to:

1. Expand and clarify protections for election workers to include other persons involved in the administration of elections, like volunteer election workers, those involved in the supply and maintenance of election equipment, and family members of election officials;
2. Broaden the scope of threats currently prohibited by law to include threats of harm not only to persons but also their property; and
3. Prohibit intentionally damaging polling places, tabulation centers, or other places being used as election infrastructure.