

SB 1516 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Judiciary

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Meeting Dates: 2/9, 2/11

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure is a public safety omnibus that adds threats to public officials to the crime of aggravated harassment. The measure also reinforces a magistrate's authority to consider primary and secondary release criteria when making a pretrial release decision. Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

Detailed Analysis:

Threats to Public Officials

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

Pretrial Release Decisions

Limits standing orders' effects on a magistrate's authority to consider primary and secondary release criteria when making a pretrial release decision, including community safety and the risk of failure to appear.

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact but no statement yet issued

REVENUE: May have revenue impact but no statement yet issued

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Removes the specifically named non-profit as the administrator of and technical assistance provider for Justice Reinvestment Equity Program sub-grants and directs the Criminal Justice Commission to select a culturally responsive technical assistance provider with prior experience working with subgrantees. It also details four technical assistance provider responsibilities.

BACKGROUND:

In a 2024 report, [Rising Threats to Public Officials](#), the Combatting Terrorism Center at West Point notes that the average number of federal charges for threatening public officials has increased in recent years, from an average of 38 between 2013 and 2016 to an average of 62 per year between 2017 and 2022. A 2024 [report](#) by the Brennan Center found that 43 percent of state legislators had experienced threats and that those threats affected some officeholders' willingness to continue service, address certain topics, or hold events in public spaces. Prior enacted legislation directed at this issue limited the public's accessibility to residential addresses for certain public officials' residential addresses required in documents filed with the Secretary of state or contained in its voter registration system, except through a public records request. These include 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 disclosure as a public record. Senate Bill 473 (2025) (not

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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.

PRELIMINARY