



NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Council Chair Files Bill to Protect Workers' Rights for County Employees

Ellicott City, MD (October 6, 2021) – At Monday's legislative session for the Howard County Council, Council Chair Liz Walsh introduced Council Bill 80-2021, legislation aimed at protecting employees for the County's Department of Recreation and Parks (DRP) and Department of Public Works (DPW) from physical harassment and verbal threats of violence.

As written, the legislation would prohibit physical harassment of DPW employees at properties such as the Alpha Ridge Landfill. The bill would also prohibit visitors to the Landfill and other DPW and DRP properties from threatening unlawful violence against County DPW and DRP employees, allowing for a ban of up to five days from the property where the violation occurred if necessary.

"During the pandemic, these employees have kept up an incredible level of service despite rising crowds and sometimes hostile encounters," said **Chair Walsh**. "Workers should never feel afraid to do their job, especially when they perform essential services for the community. I'm honored to sponsor this bill after extensive conversations with Local 3085 and the County's Office of Law. It is our duty to protect these essential workers from unacceptable hostility. This is an opportunity for us to show that *civility* truly is the cornerstone of our County, not just for those who live here, but for *all*."

"I want to thank Councilwoman Liz Walsh for having the courage to put forward Council Bill 80-2021 and put the necessary work into this long-standing abuse of employees for simply providing crucial services to Howard County residents," said **Dale Chase, President of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees Local 3085**. "Councilwoman Walsh has demonstrated actions that truly make Howard County the best place to live, play, and now work. It is sad that a legislative remedy was necessary for this long-standing problem that has been well known for years."

Testimony for this bill will be accepted at the legislative public hearing on Monday, October 18th, 2021. Anyone may sign up to testify by visiting <https://apps.howardcountymd.gov/otestimony>. The meeting is open to the public and may be viewed online by visiting <https://cc.howardcountymd.gov/Online-Tools/Watch-Us>. If you would like to submit written testimony, please email CouncilMail@HowardCountyMD.gov.

To read Council Bill 80-2021, please visit <https://cc.howardcountymd.gov/Legislation>.

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