

My name is Sheila Casey. I am a life-long resident of the St. Paul area- first in the city proper and now for many years in the suburbs. I am a retired educator and have worked as an elections judge, most recently as a head or assistant head judge, as well as an elections worker for 30+ years, most of that time while in my educator role. I strongly support the provisions of this bill for several reasons.

Many people who serve as election judges are retired individuals. To qualify to serve in this role, prospective judges must complete several hours of training- often over a span of several sessions. Those serving as head or assistant head judges attend planning and post-election meetings to preview and then recap the prospects and post voting events of each election day. Although no polling place I have staffed has had an episode of attempted intimidation or harassment, I know anecdotally it has happened in Ramsey County and resulted in the affected judges permanently ending their very valuable participation in this activity. (I'll note that it is always a challenge to find enough judges to work either half or full day shifts. A full shift for a head judge is 6 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. or even later.) I know there have been incidents of individuals disrupting polling places by screaming and yelling at the poll workers and refusing to leave. A bill like that proposed here would clarify that such action is unacceptable and confirm for law enforcement that they can and should be removed.

Election and other poll workers are paid a minimal hourly wage- because of course people don't do this for the money. However, even one episode can and has resulted in an otherwise willing and enthusiastic volunteer ending their involvement because of bad behavior.

Let me reiterate: a bill like that proposed here would clarify that such attempts to intimidate and harass poll workers is unacceptable.

Thank you.

Sheila Casey
4 Eagle Ridge Rd.
North Oaks, MN 55127
651-484-8981
stephenson.casey4@gmail.com