

H.541

An act relating to interference with voters and election officials

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 17 V.S.A. § 1972 is amended to read:

§ 1972. SHOWING BALLOT; ~~INTERFERENCE WITH VOTER~~

~~(a)~~ A voter who, except in cases of assistance as provided in this title, allows ~~his or her~~ the voter's ballot to be seen by another person with an apparent intention of letting it be known how ~~he or she~~ the voter is about to vote or makes a false statement to the presiding officer at an election as to ~~his or her~~ the voter's inability to mark ~~his or her~~ the voter's ballot or places a distinguishing mark on ~~his or her~~ the voter's ballot ~~or a person who interferes with a voter when inside the guard rail or who, within the building in which the voting is proceeding, endeavors to induce a voter to vote for a particular candidate,~~ shall be fined \$1,000.00.

~~(b) It shall be the duty of the election officers to see that the offender is duly prosecuted for a violation of this section.~~

Sec. 2. 17 V.S.A. § 1975 is added to read:

§ 1975. INTERFERENCE WITH VOTERS AND ELECTION OFFICIALS

(a) No person shall intentionally or recklessly intimidate, threaten, coerce, or attempt to intimidate, threaten, or coerce:

(1) any other person for the purpose of:

1 (A) obstructing the right of the other person to vote or to vote as the
2 other person may choose; or

3 (B) causing the other person to vote for, or not to vote for, any
4 candidate for public office or public question at any election; or

5 (2) a public servant, an election official, or a public employee for the
6 purpose of obstructing the administration of an election.

7 (b) A person who violates subsection (a) of this section shall be imprisoned
8 not more than two years or fined not more than \$2,000.00, or both.

9 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

10 This act shall take effect on passage.