



General Assembly

January Session, 2023

**Committee Bill No. 6410**

LCO No. 5277



Referred to Committee on GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION  
AND ELECTIONS

Introduced by:  
(GAE)

***AN ACT ESTABLISHING A WORKING GROUP CONCERNING SAFE  
ONLINE PRACTICES.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General  
Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a safe online  
2 practices working group to assess and make recommendations related  
3 to addressing harassing, abusive or threatening behavior on online  
4 social media platforms. Such assessment shall include, but need not be  
5 limited to, (1) studying the short-term and long-term effects of harassing  
6 behaviors online on elected officials, public officials and residents of this  
7 state, (2) studying what state or municipal action is needed to address  
8 negative online behaviors that consider a citizen's right to freedom of  
9 speech versus an individual's right to be free from harassment,  
10 including, but not limited to, potential changes in state law concerning  
11 additional penalties or enforcement of online harassment, and (3)  
12 establishing guidelines for the reporting of online harassment of elected  
13 state and municipal officials that find a balance between making elected  
14 officials accessible to the people whom they serve and protecting them  
15 from abusive, offensive or threatening online harassment.

16 (b) The working group shall consist of the following members:

17 (1) Three appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,  
18 one of whom has expertise in social media company standards and the  
19 technical capabilities of such companies, one of whom is a professor at  
20 an institution of higher education who has expertise in first amendment  
21 rights and one of whom is a member of the House of Representatives;

22 (2) Three appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one  
23 of whom is a sworn member of a municipal law enforcement agency,  
24 one of whom is a sworn member of the State Capitol Police and one of  
25 whom is a member of the Senate;

26 (3) Two appointed by the majority leader of the House of  
27 Representatives, one of whom is a representative of an organization  
28 protecting civil liberties and one of whom is a representative of an  
29 organization representing municipalities;

30 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, who is an  
31 unpaid municipal official;

32 (5) Two appointed by the minority leader of the House of  
33 Representatives, one of whom is a member of federal law enforcement  
34 and one of whom is a member of the House of Representatives;

35 (6) Two appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, one of whom  
36 is a psychologist with expertise in the human impact of hate speech and  
37 harassing behaviors and one of whom is a member of the Senate;

38 (7) The executive director of the Freedom of Information  
39 Commission, or a designee;

40 (8) The Chief State's Attorney, or a designee; and

41 (9) The Attorney General, or a designee.

42 (c) Any member of the working group appointed under subdivision  
43 (1), (2), (3), (4), (5) or (6) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member

44 of the General Assembly.

45 (d) All initial appointments to the working group shall be made not  
46 later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. If any  
47 appointments under subdivisions (1) to (6), inclusive, of subsection (b)  
48 of this section have not been made by the appointing authority thirty-  
49 one days after the effective date of this section, the chairpersons of the  
50 joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
51 matters relating to government administration shall jointly fill any such  
52 appointment. Any vacancy other than the initial appointment shall be  
53 filled by the appointing authority.

54 (e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro  
55 tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the working group  
56 from among the members of the working group. Such chairpersons shall  
57 schedule the first meeting of the working group, which shall be held not  
58 later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

59 (f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the  
60 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to government  
61 administration shall serve as administrative staff of the working group.

62 (g) The working group shall conduct at least one public hearing to  
63 solicit testimony from the public.

64 (h) Not later than February 1, 2024, the working group shall submit a  
65 report on any findings and recommendations to the joint standing  
66 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
67 relating to government administration and planning and development,  
68 in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,  
69 including, but not limited to, any recommended changes in state law  
70 and guidelines developed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section. The  
71 working group shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or  
72 February 1, 2024, whichever is later.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
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**Statement of Purpose:**

To establish a working group to study the issue of online harassment of individuals and make recommendations concerning necessary changes in state law to penalize online harassment of individuals and guidelines for reporting online harassment of municipal and state-elected officials.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*

Co-Sponsors: REP. LEEPER, 132nd Dist.; REP. KEITT, 134th Dist.  
REP. KAVROS DEGRAW, 17th Dist.; REP. PARIS, 145th Dist.  
REP. BERGER-GIRVALO, 111th Dist.; REP. WELANDER, 114th Dist.  
REP. ROSARIO, 128th Dist.; REP. PALM, 36th Dist.  
REP. TURCO, 27th Dist.

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