

Dear IMC-CAD Team Action recipient - Feel free to print/share this sheet with your action group and friends.

Here's How to Clip the Wings of the "Halo Act"!



Picture of the back of two people who are holding phones and recording law enforcement action in the area.

"The Halo Act" (MA H.2057) is no angel. Here's what it is and why and how we can oppose it. **November 20th is the deadline to submit written testimony.** Let's row in the same direction!

[Action Summary](#)

[Why We Think This is Important](#)

[Source\(s\)](#)

[Action Details](#)

[Background Information](#)

[Bonus Actions](#)

Action Summary	<p>Estimated time: 5-10 minutes, not including time invested in Background Information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This bill would let law enforcement and other first responders create "buffer zones", reportedly up to 25 feet, where filming or photographing their actions could be punished by fines or jail time.• Read as much of the background information below as you wish.• Use our link to find your legislators and make your call! Use our scripts or personalize your own.• Take 5 minutes and call your Massachusetts State Representative and State Senator today to oppose H.2057, the "HALO Act."• Critical: Take another few minutes to submit written testimony to MA's Joint Committee on Judiciary.• Ask those you know to do the same.
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Why We Think This is Important	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The right to record public officials is a core First Amendment protection and one of the few ways ordinary people can document police or ICE actions, public safety incidents, and misconduct.• The HALO Act's vague language, allowing penalties for "interfering," "impeding," or "harassing" first responders, could easily be used to silence lawful filming.• Massachusetts should <i>protect</i> transparency, <i>not</i> criminalize it.
Source	Indivisible Northampton-Swing Left Western MA
Action Details	<p>Action 1 - Call your MA elected officials. (See scripts below.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find your MA legislators' contact information HERE.• Determine if your MA Representative is a Petitioner (supporter) of Halo Act here. (if they are on the list, they are a supporter)• IF LEAVING A VOICEMAIL: Please leave your full street address to <u>ensure your call is tallied</u>. (If you're shy...call at Midnight...staffers still must log the calls)• Please personalize all the words in blue. <hr/> <p>If your Rep/Sen is <u>not</u> a petitioner (supporter) on H.2057, make this call:</p> <p><i>"Hello, my name is [Your Name] and I live in [Your Town]. I'm calling to urge you to oppose H.2057, the so-called HALO Act. This bill would prevent the public from recording ICE and law-enforcement actions, which are matters of public interest. Massachusetts residents have a constitutional right to record public officials performing their duties in public. Please speak out and vote NO on H.2057 and protect our right to transparency and accountability.</i></p> <p><i>Thank you for your time and consideration,[Your Name]"</i></p> <p>If your Rep/Sen is a petitioner (supporter) of H.2057, make this call:</p> <p><i>"Hello, my name is [Your Name] from [Your Town]. I'm deeply concerned that you are listed as a petitioner on H.2057, the HALO Act. This bill would block citizens from filming immigration and police activity, the very recordings that have exposed abuses and saved lives. Supporting the safety of first responders is one thing, but unintended consequences to First Amendment protection is another.</i></p> <p><i>I'm asking you to withdraw your support and instead defend the right to record government officials in public. Transparency keeps everyone safer.</i></p> <p><i>Thank you for your time and consideration,[Your Name]"</i></p>

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	<p>Action 2 - Submit Written Testimony to the Judiciary Committee</p> <p>Submit online through the Legislature’s bill page: malegislature.gov/Bills/194/H2057</p> <p>Scroll down to “Submit Testimony” (or “Update Testimony”) and upload your file or paste text directly.</p> <p>Or email your testimony to: jacqueline.o.manning@mahouse.gov (Committee staff) talía.quinn@mahouse.gov (Research Director) michael.day@mahouse.gov (House Chair) cynthia.creem@masenate.gov (Senate Chair)</p> <p>Subject line: <i>Testimony Opposing H.2057 (HALO Act)</i></p> <hr/> <p>[Sample Testimony]</p> <p>To the Joint Committee on the Judiciary:</p> <p>I am writing in strong opposition to H.2057 (HALO Act).</p> <p>This bill would unlawfully limit the public’s right to record ICE and law-enforcement activity in public, a right clearly protected under the First Amendment (<i>Glik v. Cunniffe</i>, 1st Cir. 2011).</p> <p>Public recordings have exposed racial profiling, excessive force, and civil rights abuses. Curtailing that right would erode trust and transparency in government.</p> <p>Please give H.2057 an “ought not to pass” recommendation and affirm Massachusetts’ commitment to open government and civil liberties.</p> <p>Name: [Your Full Name] Town: [Your Town] Email/Phone: [optional]</p>
Background Information	<p>As usual, you can find much of what you need to know right HERE at Massachusetts’ legislative website, in this case information about the “Halo Act”, MA H.2057. The bill is brief, only 2 pages once you scroll past the first two pages of heading and list of Petitioners (<i>some</i> of your legislators) and utilize the tabs at that page: Bill History, Petitioners, Testify, and Committee Summary.</p> <p>According to Talia Quinn, Research Director for MA’s Joint Committee on the Judiciary, the committee the bill is in now,</p> <p><i>“We heard oral testimony during the hearing on 09/23, but we are accepting written testimony as long as the bill is before us.</i></p>

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We have a 60 day reporting deadline from that hearing with a potential to extend it an additional 30 days.

If you want to send any written testimony, we would be happy to review it.” (Bold emphasis: The CAD)

The **deadline for receipt of written testimony is November 20, 2025 at 5:00PM (EST).**

By choosing the Testimony tab [here](#) constituents will be taken through instructions to set up an account and how to submit written testimony. Constituents can also find their way to more specific information on the committee and history of the bill hearing [here](#).

What the Halo Act (H.2057) proposes

- The bill is titled “An Act ensuring the safety and dignity of first responders (Halo Act).”
- It would **create penalties** for people who “intentionally impede or interfere, threaten or harass first responders performing such duties.”
[LegiScan+2BillTrack50+2](#)
- It would allow first responders in certain emergency situations to establish a **buffer zone** (as reported, around 25 feet) from which bystanders must remain. For example: “The bill allows first responders ... to set up a 25-foot buffer zone ... verbally warn people to stay out ... People who ignore this warning ... up to \$1,000 fine for first offense, up to \$5,000 & up to 1 year jail for second/future offenses.” [WBZ NewsRadio 1030+2Massachusetts General Court+2](#)
- According to the bill summary, its aim is to ensure the safety and dignity of first responders (paramedics, firefighters, police) by reducing interference.
[LegiScan+1](#)

Why oppose the bill? If after familiarizing yourself with the bill you are concerned about citizens being fined when filming on their phones (e.g., observing or recording U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) actions), here are relevant issues and arguments you could raise:

First Amendment / recording rights

- People filming or photographing public operations (including law enforcement/immigration-enforcement) have constitutionally protected rights (in many contexts) to record public officials performing their duties in public places.
- The WBZ NewsRadio report says critics believe the measure “would make it substantially more difficult for the media and others to record police, which, in some instances, has provided crucial evidence of misconduct.” [WBZ NewsRadio 1030](#)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● If the bill grants broad authority to create buffer zones and penalize “interference,” it may chill or prevent filming of law enforcement in public or semi-public spaces, raising free speech and accountability concerns. <p>Vague or overbroad language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Terms like “impede,” “interfere,” “harass,” and “threaten” may be subjectively interpreted. The bill text uses the phrase “intentionally impede or interfere, threaten or harass first responders performing such duties.” LegiScan+1● What counts as “impede” or “harass” could be ambiguous; filming may be construed (by some) as interference even if it’s simply documentation.● The buffer zone (25 ft) as reported may not be clearly defined in all contexts, potentially allowing first responders or others to arbitrarily define “emergency situations” or “perimeter” without clear standards. WBZ NewsRadio 1030 <p>Impact on transparency and accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Filming public officials (including law enforcement) has been a tool for oversight, transparency, and public information. Restricting that could reduce accountability.● In the context of ICE or immigration enforcement, citizens or observers filming may be one of the few ways to document misconduct or abuses; inhibiting that may raise civil-liberties concerns. <p>Scope and unintended consequences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● While the aim may be protecting first responders, the bill could be applied in ways that go beyond the intended use (for example to other agencies or less clearly defined “emergencies”).● If the bill is used (or interpreted) to prevent filming of immigration enforcement (e.g., ICE), it may raise specific concerns about oversight of federal agencies or civil-rights protections. <p>Supporting the safety of first responders is one thing, but unintended consequences to First Amendment protection is another!</p>
Bonus Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Post on social media using tag #NoHALOActMA● Host a “CAD party” and pick a date/time where many people call together and post about submitting written testimony. It’s motivating and there is empowerment both in numbers and being with others!● Share this link to SUBSCRIBE TO THE IMC-CAD with everyone you can (we are keeping this subscription free—it’s ok to skip the “Pledge” button that appears).