

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB3083

Our kids deserve the best we can do when gun violence is a clear risk in our schools and since the Columbine shooting in 1999, more than 360,000 children in the US have been exposed to gun violence while at school. Timely emergency response is the difference between life and death.

Here's why this is very personal for me: I drove in to the parking lot of Pilot Butte Middle School on October 21st 2024, intending to deliver my grandson to football practice. There was marked congestion and a police car in the lot but I had no way to know that a middle school child had brought a loaded gun to school that day. Studying this and other incidents, I am fearful that we are not ready to avert gun violence in our schools. The school district has since published an After Action Review of the incident and I applaud their efforts however I would ask for more examination of the fact that, although this incident was contained, it could have been much much worse. While school shootings are relatively rare, we should have learned that they are unpredictable, play out extremely quickly and are so often horrific. The law enforcement response at Robb Elementary in Uvalde on May 24th, 2022 for instance —where 19 students and two teachers lost their lives— was deemed a failure by a Critical Incident Review. Failed leadership, training, and policies are all cited. I would maintain that if we are to break this chain of failures to protect our children, the first step in any incident involving lethal means, risk of physical violence or medical emergency must be the availability of a well established panic alert system. Immediate law enforcement notification including exact location and type of threat is surely the place to start . The costs are relatively minor when considering the risk. We strongly support this bill and a chance to make Oregon one of the several states to prioritize saving our children's lives.