



Good afternoon Chair Neron and members of the committee. My name is Nathan Shay and I am the School Safety and Prevention Specialist for the Willamette Education Service District in Salem.

I am here to support HB 3562 as amended with the School Safety & Prevention System program.

Unfortunately, many of us hear about school safety issues after a tragic event hits the headlines. The entire purpose of the program is to prevent these tragic events. The current School Safety & Prevention System in Oregon provides a comprehensive statewide program in the areas of behavior safety (formley threat) assessment, suicide prevention, and school culture and climate.

I am one of 19 positions that provide specific and tailored support to our Education Service Districts. Many of us provide crucial suicide prevention trainings for our school staff. Others have formed and/or lead local level 2 community teams focused on preventing acts of violence in our communities. Some of us lead regional crisis response teams that provide invaluable support to a school after a tragic event. All of us elevate the diverse needs and voices of our regions to larger statewide systems.

The beauty and strength of our team is our collective voice and shared expertise. Many of us were teachers, administrators, school counselors, social workers, and members of the law enforcement community. Our shared experience, knowledge, and passion for the work provides the needed formula to address complex school safety issues our state faces.

The current funding for the 2025–2027 biennium will stretch our current resources thin and decrease the program’s ability to provide the much needed comprehensive support to every region in our state. The school safety and prevention specialists positions will decrease from 19 to 10, almost a 50 percent reduction.

Together as a team we’ve made enormous strides in the work these past four years. We hope to keep this momentum moving forward to provide the robust school safety support our state deserves.

Thank you all so much for taking the time to look into this important issue.

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