

April 10, 2017

The Honorable Rick Larsen
U.S. House of Representatives
2113 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mike Coffman
U.S. House of Representatives
2443 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Larsen and Coffman:

We are writing to express our strong support for H.R. 1636, the School Safety Act, which reauthorizes the school security matching grant under the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968.

The past few years have sadly witnessed an increase in violent events at our nation's schools. Despite Sandy Hook and other recent tragedies, federal grant assistance specifically for security measures – an element crucial to ensuring student safety – has remained unavailable since fiscal year 2011.

Local communities and school officials know what training and resources they need to keep their students safe. However, for many schools, improvements to physical security and emergency response capabilities are simply out of reach due to initial cost. The program plays a vital role in filling gaps where state and local funding sources are unavailable despite urgent needs.

H.R. 1636 enables communities to enhance security at their schools in ways that best align with their own unique risks and local needs. The matching grants can be used for physical deterrent and security measures, security assessments, training for faculty and students, and coordination with local law enforcement. The bill also updates the program with the ability to use funds for emergency notification and response systems.

As educators, law enforcement officials and security solutions providers, our members are united in their commitment to promote safe and secure learning environments for children, teachers, visitors and school administrators.

Thank you for your sponsorship of H.R. 1636, and we look forward to working you and other leaders in Congress to restore this critical assistance to our local schools, governments, and law enforcement organizations.

Sincerely,

County Executives Association (CEA)
Door Security + Safety Professionals (DHI)
Electronic Security Association (ESA)
National School Boards Association (NSBA)
National Systems Contractors Association (NSCA)
Partner Alliance for Safer Schools (PASS)
Secure Schools Alliance (SSA)
Security Industry Association (SIA)
The School Superintendents Association (AASA)