



May 2, 2018

Chairwoman Laura Cox
Committee on Appropriations
Michigan House of Representatives
Anderson HOB
124 North Capitol Avenue
Lansing, MI 48933

Vice-chair Rob VerHeulen
Committee on Appropriations
Michigan House of Representatives
Anderson HOB
124 North Capitol Avenue
Lansing, MI 48933

Dear Chairwoman Cox and Vice-chair VerHeulen:

On behalf of the Security Industry Association (SIA) and its members, I would like to express our strong support for MI HB 5828 and HB 5830, legislation that bolsters school security safeguards across the state of Michigan. Both bills recognize that schools should be the safest place children can be—safer than any other environment outside of their homes.

SIA is a non-profit, international trade association representing approximately 900 security and life safety solutions providers. Our member companies develop, manufacture, and integrate technologies that help keep people and property safe from fire, theft, and other hazards. Some of these security solutions include video cameras, emergency communications technology, carbon monoxide detectors, and advanced locking mechanisms, to name a few. SIA represents industry leaders who constantly strive to introduce robust security solutions integrated into our nation's K-12 public schools, private academic institutions, and academic institutions of higher learning.

Respectively, MI HB 5828 and 5830, create a comprehensive school plan and fund that will enable local districts to procure necessary security solutions that protect students from malicious perpetrators, and update building code requirements to incorporate specific security measures – e.g. surveillance technology and remote door locks.

Sadly, our nation's schools have increasingly become a soft target for mass violence – at Sandy Hook Elementary, recently at Stoneman Douglas High School and in many other attacks. We support holistic approaches to improving school safety and security in response to these tragedies – recognizing there is no single action that can be taken that will, by itself, make our schools safe.

Modern effective security infrastructure is an essential component of any comprehensive school safety plan. When other prevention efforts fail, security measures such as campus access and classroom entrance control, ballistic protection, alarm systems, video surveillance, emergency communications technology, and other protections are critical to deterring, limiting and responding to school violence.

Addressing security gaps at K-12 schools has become an increasing concern for students, parents, teachers, administrators, and law enforcement. Best practices and effective measures have been identified through analysis by commissions, task forces, and other organizations throughout the country

established to provide recommendations, formulate guidelines, and set standards for school security. Yet implementation varies widely across the country as schools often struggle with budget constraints, aging facilities, and balancing other priorities within the education system.

While state assistance alone could never fully meet these needs, it is a start. This assistance is especially critical for those school districts with extremely limited budgets or high-risk, where needed investments may be out of reach due to initial technology and equipment costs.

We are committed to promoting safe and secure school environments by providing affordable and appropriate solutions, and supporting the nationwide use of best practices to ensure the most effective use of limited resources. SIA also encourages your colleagues to learn more about our industry's efforts to promote safe classrooms through adoption of the Partner Alliance for Safer Schools (PASS) school security guidelines. The guidelines can be found at www.passk12.org.

Thank you for your thoughtful leadership in addressing the crisis facing our nation's schools. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues in the legislature to support swift passage and enactment of this important bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don Erickson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "D".

Don Erickson
CEO, Security Industry Association

Cc: Members of the House Committee on Appropriations