



The STOP School Violence Act of 2018 (H.R. 4909)

Our Challenge

Each year there are hundreds of thousands of acts of youth violence, including assault, bullying, suicide and homicide, in our schools. In a majority of these acts, youth display warning signs or signals before taking any action. Unfortunately, the youth and adults who observe these signs or signals do not always recognize what they are seeing or do not report what they observed.

80% of school shooters tell someone of their plans (69% tell more than one person)¹ and **70%** of those who complete suicide tell someone of their plans or give another warning sign.² Through training about these warning signs and better coordination with law enforcement, we have a real opportunity to **STOP** school violence before it happens.

Federal Response

Following tragedies like Columbine, Virginia Tech and Sandy Hook, the federal government has funded short-term school safety initiatives focused on crisis response, active shooters, and physical infrastructure. While these are important investments, we have not yet seen sustained strategies` to curb youth violence or **STOP** suicides and violence in our schools before they happen. Our students, educators, and local law enforcement need the tools and support to take proactive and continuous steps towards improving school safety.

STOP School Violence Act

The "Student, Teachers, and Officers Preventing" School Violence Act known as the **STOP School Violence Act** is a fully offset bill that reauthorizes and amends the 2001-2009 bipartisan Secure Our Schools Act to offer Department of Justice grants to states to help our schools implement proven, evidence-based programs that **STOP** violence before it happens.

The STOP School Violence Act would:

- **Reauthorize the Bipartisan Secure Our Schools:** Authorizes the Department of Justice to make grants to states for training and technical assistance to **stop** school violence, aimed at the entire youth ecosystem: local law enforcement, school personnel, and students.
- **State-based Grants:** Permits grants to fund evidence-based strategies and programs to:
 1. Train everyone in the school ecosystem- school personnel, local law enforcement, and students- to identify and intervene to stop dangerous, violent or unlawful activities;
 2. Develop and implement anonymous reporting systems for threats of school violence, in coordinate with local law enforcement;
 3. Develop and operate Secret Service-based school threat assessment & intervention teams, and crisis intervention teams, to preemptively triage threats before tragedy hits; and
 4. Enable coordination between schools and local law enforcement
- **Using Existing Funding:** Authorizes \$50 million dollars for grants, fully offset by directing **existing funding** from the NIJ's Comprehensive School Safety Initiative (CSSI) research and pilot program into this legislation, shifting the CSSI program from pilot projects into the next phase of full school implementation.

¹ Vossekuil, B., Fein, R., Reddy, M., Borum, R., & Modzelski, W. , *The Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of School Attacks in the United States*. US Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Safe and Drug-Free Schools Programs and U.S. Secret Services, National Threat Assessment Center, Washington, D.C., 2002.

² Robins E, Murphy GE, Wilkinson RHJr, Gassner S, Kayes J. (1959). Some clinical considerations in the prevention of suicide based on a study of 134 successful suicides. *American Journal of Public Health*, 49: 888-899.