

U.S. Rep. Grothman: Introduces Student and Teacher Safety Act

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(Washington, D.C.) – Congressman Glenn Grothman (R-Glenbeulah), along with Congresswoman Karen Handel (R-GA), today introduced the Student and Teacher Safety Act. This bill would allow schools more flexibility with existing federal funds to make physical safety improvements to campus facilities, support local education programs aimed at improving school safety and security and assist in coordination between schools and local law enforcement to identify threats.

“Students and teachers have the right to feel safe in school. But, as we unfortunately saw in Florida last month, we still have work to do in preparing schools to properly identify and respond to violent individuals.”

“The Student and Teacher Safety Act will make it possible for our local schools to better secure their campus and allow them to bolster security measures as well as coordinate with local law enforcement in ways that will fit their unique needs.”

“I believe that the people who know what is best for schools are the students, parents and teachers in the local community. So, if federal dollars are already being given to schools, they should be able to use that money to protect our children.”

“Our children depend on us to provide them a safe and secure environment to learn. That’s the driving force behind this bill because it is our duty to protect the most vulnerable among us.”

Background

The Student and Teacher Safety Act would allow states and local educational agencies to use existing federal grant money to make a number of physical safety improvements to school campus facilities, such as the installment of emergency communications systems and improved surveillance systems. In addition to physical improvements to school campuses, the bill also allows states to support local educational agencies in providing programs and activities that improve the safety and security of schools, including better coordination with law enforcement.

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School improvements can include:

- Physical improvements to the school to prevent and deter unauthorized access to the school, including locks, double entry systems, hardened entrances, and interior and exterior video surveillance systems
- Security doors, automatic locks, security glass, alarm systems, metal detectors, and sensor systems
- Emergency communications systems including geographically precise mobile alert systems
- Perimeter fencing
- Emergency exit systems
- Duress or panic systems
- Emergency tip lines
- Other physical improvements to existing facilities where the primary purpose is to improve school safety

Additionally, states can use funds to:

- Identify and disseminate best practices for school safety
- Assist in the establishment or implementation of emergency planning, which may include emergency response teams to address emergencies at schools
- Establish or identify agreements with local law enforcement and health agencies, including nonprofit, public, and private mental health agencies and institutions
- Improve coordination of services and identify threats to the safety of students and schools personnel
- School safety infrastructure improvements