



September 18, 2019

U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 1.7 million members of the American Federation of Teachers, I write to express our support for H.R. 4301, the School Shooting Safety and Preparedness Act, and to express our thanks to Chairman Scott for bringing this bill to markup.

We have a collective responsibility to ensure that our schools are safe and welcoming places for teaching and learning. Fulfilling this duty will require a balanced approach that addresses both the physical safety and the emotional well-being of students, educators and school employees—an approach that includes comprehensive school safety programs and procedures, welcoming and supportive school environments, mental health supports and commonsense gun safety legislation. Finding this balance requires accurate data and information, not partisan politics cloaked in half-baked policy.

The AFT supports Congress appropriating funds for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to conduct research on gun-related deaths and similarly believes this bill needs to be passed to help reduce gun violence in and around schools.

Research is important, but I would be remiss if I didn't call on Congress to support and fund what research shows already works to support schools impacted by gun violence. The AFT calls on Congress to provide the resources to fully staff every school in America with qualified mental health professionals who can assist those affected by violence and intervene with those heading toward a crisis point.

AFT members see the tragic results of gun violence every day. I am haunted by the stories our members have told of the horror that was visited upon Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, Sandy Hook Elementary School and other schools upended by gun violence that do not make the nightly news. I urge you to support the School Shooting Safety and Preparedness Act to help us as a nation move forward in unison to reduce gun violence in and around schools.

Thank you for considering our views on this important subject.

Sincerely,

Randi Weingarten  
President

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American Federation  
of Teachers, AFL-CIO

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AFT Teachers  
AFT PSRP  
AFT Higher Education  
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