

Representative Marvin L. Abney, Chairman
House Committee on Finance

Testimony opposing H8310
Sent via electronic mail

June 13, 2022

Dear Chair Abney and members of the House Finance Committee:

I am writing in opposition to H8310. I am a Providence resident and educator.

Research shows that increasing police presence does not improve school safety. Both the Providence Alliance for Student Safety and the African American Ambassadors Group working committee on police accountability submitted proposals last year that outlined the dangers police in schools present to students, particularly Black, Indigenous and People of Color. Their proposals also presented options for police alternatives. In Ulvade, Texas, dozens of police at the scene waited for over an hour outside classrooms in which a gunman murdered 4th grade students and their teachers.

Rather than allocating state funding toward more police, which will not improve school safety, the state should allocate more funding toward counselors, restorative justice practitioners, school culture specialists and other support services. Furthermore, the state could allocate funding toward facilities improvements to make schools more secure, and towards training such as ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate).

More police in schools is not the answer to school safety concerns. I respectfully ask that you reject H8310.

Sincerely,

Aarav Sundaresh
Providence, RI