

Steven Sepe

From: Andrea Mazie <andreamazie@yahoo.com>
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To: House Finance Committee
Subject: Opposition to H8310

In the wake of yet another horrific, heartbreaking school shooting, it is natural and laudable to want to do something. However, that something should not be placing more police officers in schools.

Evidence **does not support** adding officers to schools and in fact the THOUSANDS of school police officers hired since Columbine have not prevented school shootings but instead made school less safe, less equitable and less welcoming for Black and Latinx students. These officers wind up policing students of color, creating a hostile environment for them, despite the fact that we know a positive school culture, sufficient mental health supports, and engaged and caring teachers are, in fact, key to safe and successful students.

Nothing about the tragedy in Uvalde points to more officers as a solution. In fact, if there's a take away, it's that the distinct and state's investment in a police focused solution did nothing and perhaps made things worse.

As a the parent of a middle schooler and high school student in Providence Public Schools - one who has spent time in the schools, on field trips, at bookfairs, in classrooms, at field day, volunteering walking students to school - I can tell you this is the **WRONG** solution. And putting more police in schools, in addition to wasting resources better spent elsewhere, tells students they need policing.

I beseech you to look to more productive, effective solutions to keep our students safe and help them grow and succeed.

Andrea Mazie
PPSD Parent