

Steven Sepe

From: Brittany Kraft <kraftbrittanyann@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2022 8:13 PM
To: House Finance Committee
Cc: Sen. Anderson, Kendra; Rep. Bennett, David A.
Subject: RE: H8310

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Brittany Kraft and I am a resident of Warwick writing to testify against H8310. While I understand the reactive response to the mass shooting in Uvalde, funding additional support to police in the form of two School Resource Officers in every public school is not the answer. I am deeply concerned as a parent that evidence-based research indicates a negative reaction to additional policing in school for students. Specifically,

- Police do not improve the overall safety of schools. A [Brown University study](#) released in October 2021 found that school police do not prevent school shootings, nor gun-related incidents. Further, the researchers found that the presence of SROs harms school environments and increases the number of arrests and police referrals of students, as well as the use of suspensions and expulsions. Similarly, researchers at [Hamline University](#) recently found that there is no association between the presence of an SRO and the deterrence of violence. In fact, they found a *higher* mortality rate when an armed officer is present during a school mass shooting.
- Despite commitments to "racial justice" by law enforcement agencies, students of color disproportionately experience the harm of policing including that Black girls are 3.7 times more likely than white girls to be arrested and referred to law enforcement inside schools.

Please listen directly to student voices themselves, specifically that not only do police not keep students safe but they foster an environment of intimidation and prevent learning. A survey of Rhode Island youth shows alarmingly that 1 in 5 students reported police verbally harass or make fun of students and additionally half of respondents reported police taking students out of the classroom.

Please invest in real solutions for protecting our school- RI children need more access to mental health services not School Resource Officers. There is approximately 1 counselor per 424 students in Rhode Island during a mental health crisis. Please reinvest funding from policing efforts to school counselors, community programming and community health workers in our schools.

Thank you,
Brittany Kraft
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