

## Steven Sepe

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**From:** Juliette Sabater <juliette.sabater@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 14, 2022 2:29 AM  
**To:** House Finance Committee  
**Subject:** House Bill 8310 Testimony- Juliette Sabater

Hello,

My name is Juliette Sabater, and I recently graduated from a Providence high school. I am a Leadership Team Member at the Providence Student Union. I am speaking to you from the perspective of a student who has attended Providence schools since childhood. For a few years, the Providence Student Union has been working on the Counselors Not Cops (CNC) campaign. This campaign promotes counselors in schools to help the mental health and well-being of students. CNC also goes against School Resource Officers (SROs), which have been proved in studies to have no positive effects on students. When SROs are placed in schools, they are expected to enforce the law without taking into consideration the well-being of the students. Even if these officers were expected to fulfill the roles of counselors, many do not have prior training regarding the support of the students' emotional well-being.

I urge you to oppose House Bill 8310. After the previous school shootings, it is imperative that the right action is taken. Despite the idea of placing more officers in schools to prevent these occurrences, it will end up doing more harm than good. Many of the SROs have arrested students; in Providence, there were 230 arrests in 2016-2019 in public schools, and over one-third of all arrests were for disorderly conduct. School is supposed to be a place to learn effectively. Instead of focusing our energy and resources on the well-being of the students, we are choosing to provide a temporary solution to a long-term problem. The focus needs to be shifted to the well-being of students to ensure they have a healthy learning environment. This cannot be done unless their needs are prioritized, which cannot be done without the placement of more counselors, psychologists, and social workers in schools.

We can't keep making the same mistakes. After each school shooting, the instinctive decision is to add police officers, metal detectors, and security guards in schools. It is a reactive approach that continues to fail our students and families. Instead of using officers as a temporary solution, we need counselors, not cops.