



Great Public Schools
for Every Student

1201 16th St., N.W. | Washington, DC 20036 | Phone: (202) 833-4000

Lily Eskelsen Garcia
President

Rebecca S. Pringle
Vice President

Princess R. Moss
Secretary-Treasurer

John C. Stocks
Executive Director

March 12, 2019

United States House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of our three million members and the 50 million students they serve, we would like to submit for the record the following comments in connection with tomorrow's hearing, "Gun Violence Prevention and Enforcement."

Impact of gun violence on students and educators

- The [Washington Post](#) reported that 4.1 million U.S. children endured lockdown drills in the 2016-17 school year and that such drills can cause lasting psychological damage — a pressing public health issue, according to mental health professionals.
- [Everytown for Gun Safety](#) has recorded more than 400 incidents of gunfire on school grounds in the last five years.
- Firearms are the leading cause of death for African American children and the second leading cause of death for all American children.

Congressional ban on research

- The STOP School Violence Act of 2018, which the House passed by a vote of 407-10, makes it lawful to research gun violence as a public health issue.
- The 2018 omnibus funding bill says that CDC "has the authority to conduct research on the causes of gun violence."

What America's educators would like to see

- We encourage Congress to fund research on gun violence as a public health issue by the Centers on Disease Control and Prevention.
- We also encourage Congress to increase funding for — and access to — school-based health centers and their staffs. Proper diagnosis can and often starts in our schools, yet there is a shortage of counselors, nurses, social workers, and psychologists in public education.
- Funding for educators' professional development in related areas such as bullying, mental and behavioral health, and cultural competence needs to increase as well.

We deeply appreciate the committee's examination of active shooter drills. On behalf of America's students and educators, we thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association