

HB 1089

Primary and Secondary Education – Expansion of Mental Health Services and Prohibition of School Resource Officers (Police-Free Schools Act)

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am writing this letter to voice my concern about removing School Resource Officers (SRO's) from schools. As a Retired Army Recruiter, I experienced first-hand the benefits of having SRO's in the building. On several occasions, when visiting a school in an official capacity, I witnessed fights break out among high school students. Often, the fight would escalate and more students would get involved. The teachers would become overwhelmed but knowing that an SRO was on the grounds was a relief. These fine men and women are trained to deescalate situations, separate the parties involved, and preserve any evidence they may be involved. I don't see how removing an asset from the school community benefits anyone.

In the current "cancel" culture and "defund the Police" movements, we must not become so politically correct that we are complacent in putting our kids lives at risk. There are kids that attend school who would prefer not to be there. Their goal in life is to disrupt classrooms, bully other students, and distract others from learning. Many sell drugs at school. Some even carry concealed weapons. Remove the SRO's and you make it that much easier for these students to be that distraction. If the SRO can deter one bad act, isn't it worth it?

We've all heard the saying "One bad apple can spoil the bunch". This is true for students as well as for SRO's. We don't hold every student accountable whenever one does wrong. We get to the root of the problem and put plans in place to prevent it from happening again. Therefore, we shouldn't hold all SRO's accountable if one goes too far in his / her duties. This does nothing to foster a positive image for the SRO's.

Lastly, this is also a generational problem. Many homes no longer teach discipline, respect, accountability, pride in oneself. The disrespect shown towards the SRO's begins at home. If the parent (s) have negative views of the Police, they pass that onto their children through their actions towards the Police and the way they speak about them.

In closing, we have many issues in this country right now that we should be discussing. Removing SRO's isn't one of them. Teach respect at home. Teach discipline at home. Teach caring for others. Teach that violence isn't the solution – EVER.

Respectfully,

Brent Reynolds