

**Testimony to Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
April 4, 2023**

Good afternoon, Chairman Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and members of the committee. My name is Jan Donohoe McNamara.

I am a resident of Bethesda, in District 16. I am also the daughter of a combat veteran and a volunteer with the Maryland Chapter of Moms Demand Action.

I am here today in support of HB515.

As some of you are aware, my brother-in-law, John McNamara, was murdered during the 2018 mass shooting that took place at the Capital Gazette newspaper – only four miles away from where we are all sitting right now.

On the day their uncle was killed, my daughters were 9 and 11 years old. Approximately eight months after John died, I was contacted by my older daughter's school. I was informed that they were planning an active shooter drill and that I could bring her to school a little late that morning so she would miss it. Soon after that, the school reached out to say they realized the one-year anniversary of the Parkland shooting was the following day, so the drill would not be held.

My daughters have seen their uncle's face on the front page of the Washington Post, and his murderer's face in the national media throughout the years-long legal proceedings regarding his case. The idea that my children would be required to act out a realistic scenario in which a gunman was hunting them in the hallways of their school is not something I take lightly. I am grateful that the administration gave my husband and me the opportunity to decide how our family would proceed. And I appreciate that they thought through the context in which all of the students would experience such training and its timing.

My family's connection to gun violence is painful – but it is not unique. Each day, more than 110 Americans die through some form of gun violence. On top of that, students across the nation see headlines about school shootings – or incidents where a weapon has been brought to school – far too often. Many young people have been deeply affected by this issue in ways we are only beginning to understand.

I ask that you support this bill.

Thank you for your time.