



**SecureSchoolsAlliance**  
Research & Education

## ***The Time for School Security Legislation is Now!*** ***17 Dead in Florida High School Shooting***

**WILMINGTON, DE (Feb. 15, 2018)** – The Secure Schools Alliance renewed its call, today, for federal legislation to strengthen the security infrastructure, security technology and life safety systems of America’s K-12 public schools.

“It is time that Congress make improving school security infrastructure a priority,” said Robert Boyd, executive director of the Alliance. “No intruder should be able to enter a school to kill or injure students or staff. This appears to be a tragedy that could have been avoided.”

The Alliance has been working on the following efforts:

- Partnering with 11 organizations – including Safe and Sound Schools, a Sandy Hook Initiative; the Security Industry Association; Partner Alliance for Safer Schools; and the Door Security and Safety Foundation; the National Association of State Fire Marshals; and the Association for Middle Level Education – petitioned the Trump Administration to include school security in the infrastructure bill. As of today, schools have not been included in the bill. These groups continue to urge the Administration to support school security.
- Joining the Build America’s School Infrastructure Coalition, along with the National Council on School Facilities and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Fund, to support [H.R. 2475](#) and [S.1674](#), which both seek funding for improving school infrastructure.
- Collaborating with The Security Industry Association, the School Superintendents Association, National School Boards Association, the Electronic Security Association and others to support [H.R. 1636](#) to reauthorize and fund the school security matching grant program, which has not been funded since 2011. The Alliance supports new bi-partisan legislation in the House, [H.R. 4909](#), and pending legislation in the Senate to also resurrect school security matching grants.

“Because we cannot do everything, should not be an excuse for doing nothing,” said Dr. Erroll Southers, director of the Safe Communities Institute, professor at the University of Southern California’s Price School of Public Policy and an expert in homegrown terrorism and critical infrastructure protection. Southers, who is also a former police officer and FBI SWAT team member, added, “I have no words anymore. It is time to intelligently respond to the problem and stop being shocked every time tragedies like this happen.”

Michele Gay, a mother, former teacher and co-founder of Safe and Sound Schools, lost her daughter, Josephine Grace, in the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy. Today, Michele travels the country delivering the programs and resources of Safe and Sound Schools, sharing lessons learned from Sandy Hook, raising awareness for school safety and security, and helping others recover from tragedies of their own. “My heart is broken for the victims, families and survivors of the shooting at Stoneman Douglas High School. As reporting continues, I am taken back to December 14, 2012. The hearts and prayers of our families and the entire Safe and Sound Schools Team are with those hurting today.”

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### **About the Secure Schools Alliance**

The Secure Schools Alliance and Secure Schools Research and Education is taking a leadership role in launching a national conversation about the issue of school safety and advocating a course of action for addressing it. This convening of education, industry, public safety, law enforcement, corporate and community leaders will work together to ensure the security of our nation's schools through federal and state policy, legislation, research, pilot programs and the promotion of best practices. The goal is to improve the security infrastructure, security technology and life safety systems of all public K-12 schools. For more information visit: <https://secureschoolresources.org/>

### **About Safe and Sound Schools**

Founded in 2013, Safe and Sound Schools works with school communities and mental health, law enforcement, and safety professionals to create and ensure the safest possible learning environment for all youth. The non-profit organization, started by parents who lost their children in the tragedy at Sandy Hook, delivers programs, tools, and resources, backed by national experts, to educate all members of the school community, from students and parents, to teachers and administrators, to law enforcement and local leaders. Winner of the 2015 SBANE New England Innovation Award for nonprofits, Safe and Sound Schools continues to answer the growing needs of school communities with custom programs, assessments, and training, reaching schools in nearly every state in the country. For more information, visit <https://www.safeandsoundschools.org>.

### **About Safe Communities Institute at USC**

The Safe Communities Institute (SCI) at the University of Southern California Sol Price School of Public Policy engages in research, interdisciplinary education, and collaboration to advance sustainable public safety strategies, policies, and programs. The Institute's mission is three-fold: To reach people with a new understanding public safety that hinges on education, awareness and research, and community engagement; To advance violence prevention strategies, policies and research; To contribute to global security in a time of increasing threats. SCI provides a 21st-century approach to public safety by adopting a multidisciplinary "whole-of-community" methodology, which informs SCI educational programs, research projects and community engagement. <https://sci.usc.edu/>

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