

April 29, 2025

Co-Chair Lee, Co-Chair Franson and Members:

On behalf of school board members and school administrators across Minnesota, we write to express our strong support for HF 3220, which would provide rapid access key boxes to Minnesota schools. Ensuring that law enforcement can quickly enter our schools during emergencies is essential for keeping our students, teachers and staff safe.

In urgent situations, every second counts. A KnoxBox is a secure box mounted on a school's exterior that contains master keys, access cards, and floor plans for use by authorized first responders. This allows police or emergency personnel to unlock doors and access all areas of the campus much faster, ensuring help reaches students, teachers and staff without delay. Traditional methods – such as relying on administrators to retrieve keys or attempting to breach locked doors – waste precious time.

Many Minnesota school districts have already collaborated with local first responders to determine optimal KnoxBox placement and protocols. Most of these are for fire department access, and our districts appreciate your support for HF 3220, which will reappropriate historic 2018 School Safety Grants funding to support additional KnoxBoxes for law enforcement for all Minnesota schools.

By working together, schools and law enforcement can ensure the boxes are positioned for easy access and that there are clear procedures for maintaining the keys and updating contents as needed. This partnership approach maximizes the effectiveness of the system and gives all stakeholders confidence that rapid access for responders has been thoughtfully planned and will work when it counts.

The U.S. Department of Justice has found that it is now a best practice and should be an industry standard to have a KnoxBox in every school. There are proven safety and practical benefits of KnoxBoxes for law enforcement access and we support Minnesota in joining the growing number of states taking action to improve school emergency response through this measure.

The National Fire Protection Association's NFPA 3000 standard recommends that facilities have secure key boxes to enable rapid responder access. Similarly, the Partner Alliance for Safer Schools (PASS), a respected school security consortium, includes law enforcement lockboxes as a best practice in its published guidelines for K-12 security.



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Finally, the “I Love You Guys” Foundation – a nonprofit devoted to school crisis response and creator of the Standard Response Protocol used in tens of thousands of schools – has partnered with the Knox Company to promote robust emergency readiness tools like KnoxBoxes nationwide.

Thank you for your consideration and we stand ready to assist in planning and implementing this initiative in collaboration with our public safety partners.

Sincerely,

Minnesota School Boards Association

Minnesota School Administrators Association

Association of Metropolitan School Districts

Minnesota Association of School Business Officials

Minnesota Rural Education Association

Minnesota Elementary School Principals Association

Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals