

Dear Members of the Minnesota House of Representatives Education Policy Committee,

My child attends school in a Minnesota suburb that does not have a safety system like the measures proposed in this bill HF15. I often worry about my children's safety and how school staff will handle an extreme act of violence without effective safety capabilities or features such as those proposed in this bill.

This bill is an extremely important step in addressing school violence with comprehensive solutions that will provide the staff and students the tools to keep safe if the unthinkable happens. Every minute counts and could mean the difference between life and death. Adding measures into schools like ballistic panels, individual classroom door locking systems, and in-depth training for school staff will be a game changer.

We don't want to get caught up in endless debates about guns; we just wish for effective safety solutions that will keep our kids safe right now when violence presents itself.

Please support HF 15 and pass it out of your committee. Thank you for considering this bill as the next step toward providing safety for our schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anna', written over a horizontal line.

Anna Hawke
Lakeville Dental
(952) 469-3300

Dear Members of the Minnesota House of Representatives Education Policy Committee,

I am writing this letter to show my support for Minnesota legislative bill HF15 (MN Shield Act) regarding school safety measures. My children attend school in Lakeville, where a comprehensive and multi-layered safety system has been implemented and installed.

It gives me peace of mind knowing that my children have immediate safety options available to them at their school should extreme violence occur there. We are fortunate to have this system in Lakeville. However, other schools do not have the depth of safety available to them as we do in Lakeville.

This bill is an extremely important step in addressing school violence with measures that will provide the staff and students the tools to keep safe at a moment's notice.

We want to focus on effective safety solutions that maintain the educational environment, and this bill addresses just that.

Thank you for considering this bill as the next step toward providing safety for our schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Harrison", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Jennifer Harrison, DDS
Lakeville Dental
(952) 469-3300

Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts and experience regarding this matter. My name is Angie Hanson and I work as a secretary at the Chisago Lakes Middle School. I'd like to share some information as the why I'm in favor of the SHIELD ACT.

The Chisago Lakes Middle School is sorely outdated in means of safety and building updates. Unfortunately we are the only school that doesn't have the same safety measures as the other buildings in the district.

To enter the building, visitors must only press a button. After that, the visitor walks directly onto campus without entering a secure and safe area first. They have free range to go anywhere in the school.

It's incredibly scary to think that if an intruder were to enter the building and attack me, there would be no other staff member to alert other staff or students. The only "barricade" I have is a roll down metal window that does virtually nothing for my safety. Additionally, the button I press to begin the process of a lockdown procedure doesn't alert the additional office staff that I am in danger. On top of that, the button I would have to press is on the far left of my office and the rope I would need to pull down to close the metal window is on the right side of my office. Where every second is precious, it would take too much time to be able to roll the window down.

In the last three years we have had to go into lockdown numerous times. It's a different and scary world we live in now.

I implore each committee member to vote in favor of the SHIELD ACT. We are in desperate need of added safety and security measures.

I appreciate your time and consideration of this matter,

Angie Hanson

Attendance Secretary

Good afternoon Members and Chair Bennett, thank you for allowing me to speak today on behalf of the Shield Act. My name is Lauryn Belz, and I am a Junior at White Bear Lake Area High School.

As a highschooler, it is well-known that most students do not feel safe at school, myself included. As a student, I believe that it is of the utmost importance that students feel safe in their schools, which is why I support this act.

On a personal level, I have experienced countless lockdowns, both drills and real. Just this past year, as I was getting ready to go to school, I got a text message from a friend saying the school had gone into a lockdown. My friend was extremely upset because she had been studying in a classroom alone, and she had little space where she could hide from sight, and didn't have a teacher to go to for help. If my friend was able to access tools that could call for help and have a classroom built to protect her and other students, this situation would have looked much different.

This, among countless other examples, is the reason why schools need the funding to create safer environments. Having a building equipped with features to keep my peers and I safe is extremely important, which is why I support the Shield Act.

Thank you for your time today, and I'm asking that you please join me in supporting the SHIELD act.

Laurn Belz

White Bear Lake Area High School, Junior

Chair and Members of the Committee,

First, I want to say thank you for taking the time to read my testimony and thoughts regarding school safety and the SHIELD Act. My name is Savannah Severson and I am a junior at White Bear Lake Area High School. I have grown up in a generation where students are afraid to go to school due to threats and the possibility of violence. In my opinion there is no better group of people than Gen Z to speak on the topic of school safety.

There have been many times throughout my years in elementary, middle, and high school where my school has been placed in lockdown or we have received threats. Specifically, there was a situation where there was a weapon rumored to be on campus. Although this did not turn into a deadly situation, my classmates and I were placed in a lockdown until the threat was contained.

I often think about what I would do if there was an active shooter on campus. Without a clear and easy way to contact emergency services and school staff, and without bullet proof glass, there isn't much protecting us from an intruder. Currently, my school has shatterproof glass, but that isn't effective enough against these threats.

Even with the new construction being completed at my high school, my school is still not safe enough, and many schools across the district and in Minnesota are worse off than mine.

Passing the SHIELD Act is a way that we can proactively keep students safe. Students would be able to be confident that their school is prepared for the worst scenario imaginable. With the security and tools that this bill would provide my school with, I would be more confident

going to school and would be able to focus on why I am actually at school, to learn without feeling anxious about my safety.

I am asking that each of you support the SHIELD Act. My school, and schools throughout Minnesota are in need of more security and safety measures as a whole.

Thank you for taking the time to read through my testimony.

Savannah Severson

White Bear Lake Area High School, Junior