

September 11, 2025

Minnesota Senate Gun Violence Prevention Working Group
Senator Ron Latz
Senator Zaynab Mohamed

Dear Working Group Co-Chairs,

The shadow of recent targeted killings at schools and universities is fresh on all of our minds at present. We all desire to reduce violence in our society, yet we must recognize that violence against innocent people in unprotected locations has been occurring since the beginning of time. We must re-evaluate approaches that have not shown effectiveness and focus instead on proven, proactive solutions with measurable impact.

My work over the past 30 years in law enforcement and corporate security has shown me that effective prevention requires focusing on intelligence-led programs, outcome-driven threat management and target hardening. Locations such as K-12 schools, colleges and universities are places where we have opportunities to invest in these programs in particular, using proven methods from corporate workplace violence prevention.

A wide array of intelligence-led solutions, particularly those in common use in business settings, routinely identify persons and behaviors of concern so threat assessment and management can be initiated. This involves training people to recognize and report these concerns, having tools to monitor for leakage of violent ideologies and their precursors, having experts who are trained to manage these cases, and a reporting mechanism for the initiation of this threat assessment process.

Once a report of a concern triggers a review, this review should be conducted by experts who are trained in managing these situations to non-violent outcomes. Experts should be outside of law enforcement, as law enforcement are limited by certain necessary controls on governmental overreach, and should be empowered to take steps focused specifically on successful outcomes. Where these threat management programs have been implemented, there are many success stories where violence has been prevented.

Finally, target hardening to ensure that formerly soft targets are no longer seen as such. Schools are often selected due to predictability and vulnerability, which targeted protective measures can mitigate. Through various means, to include effective access controls, weapons detection technologies, highly trained school resource officers where appropriate, alongside layered physical security designs, schools can be the safe spaces that they should be.

While the potential for violence may always exist, acknowledging this reality empowers us to take strategic action to prevent, detect, delay and deter actors on a pathway to violence. We have proven methodologies and merely need the license and funding to implement them effectively in these settings where they are so very clearly now needed.

Sincerely,

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