



Prevent Gun Violence, Not More Firearms

Written Statement from the Solutions Not Suspensions Coalition to the Senate Gun Violence Prevention Workgroup

September 12, 2025

Dear Chair Ron Latz, Chair Zaynab Mohamed, and the members of the Senate Gun Violence Prevention Workgroup,

The Solutions Not Suspensions Coalition commends the MN Senate's dedication to address the critical issue of gun violence that plagues our schools and communities. Our communities in Minnesota have been rocked in the wake of such immense violence. We share your fundamental goal: to see an unequivocal end to this senseless violence, and are pro this workgroup and the intent of its creation. We cannot continue to allow our children and communities to be victims of firearms. With that stated, the SNS coalition writes to advocate for a comprehensive approach that prioritizes prevention, community engagement, and genuine reform over increased policing and militarization in our school communities.

We firmly believe that introducing more School Resource Officers (SROs) and armed guards into our educational institutions will not deter outside gun violence. The reality is that school shootings have continued to escalate alongside a national increase in both gun violence and the presence of armed personnel in schools. This correlation suggests that simply adding more firearms to school environments is not an effective preventative measure. Instead, it risks creating a more hostile and intimidating atmosphere for students and staff, while failing to address the root causes of violence. One study found that the death rate during shooting incidents in schools that had an armed guard present was nearly three times as high as during shooting incidents in schools without an armed guard. Sources ([Students Demand Action, Presence of Armed School Officials and Fatal and Nonfatal Gunshot Injuries During Mass School Shootings, United States, 1980-2019,](#))

Our coalition advocates for common-sense violence prevention strategies, robust training programs for school staff and families, and accessible information on conflict resolution and mental health support. These proactive measures empower communities and individuals to identify and mitigate potential threats before they escalate.

Furthermore, we cannot overstate the importance of authentic community partnership in shaping these crucial policies. The communities most directly affected by persistent gun violence possess invaluable insights into the challenges and needs of their residents. Their voices must not only be heard but actively centered in legislative discussions. Increasing

policing without genuine input from these communities risks exacerbating existing inequities and could lead to an increase in the incarceration of community members, particularly young people.

The Solutions Not Suspensions Coalition wholeheartedly supports efforts to reduce gun violence in our streets and schools. We urge extreme caution regarding the tactics employed. We strongly oppose the introduction of more guns, whether inside or outside of our schools. Instead, we call for immediate and meaningful gun reform, including stronger restrictions on public access to certain types of firearms. While we agree with the need for tighter security measures in schools, this should manifest as improved infrastructure, threat assessment protocols, and increased mental health and appropriate response personnel, not armed police officers patrolling our hallways.

We implore the Senate Gun Violence Prevention Workgroup to involve community stakeholders directly in decision-making processes. True prevention requires collaborative efforts that address the underlying issues, empower communities, and implement responsible gun control measures. Do not add more guns; instead, work with us and the community to foster safer, more supportive environments for all.

Sincerely,

The Solutions Not Suspensions Coalition
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