

The Connecticut General Assembly

House Democrats



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School Safety and Security Working Group Promotes Legislative Proposals

HARTFORD – Members of the School Security Working Group including Chairwoman **State Representative Carol Hall (R-Enfield)**, Secretary State Representative **Dorinda Border (D-West Haven)** and Ranking Member of the Public Safety Committee **State Representative JP Sredzinski (R-Monroe)** announced their legislative agenda at a press conference at the Legislative Office Building on Wednesday, February 27th. The legislators came together to study school safety and security following the mass shooting in Parkland, Florida at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas School.

Rep. Hall opened the press conference commenting, “Since April of last year, this working group has made a thorough study of school safety and security. We have heard from a wide range of experts and stakeholders from districts and organizations across the state. We found that continuing school safety and security requires a holistic approach supported by three different but equally important concepts. These include: enhance our mental health support in schools through social and emotional learning, through early identification and intervention, positive school environment and great access to social workers and councilors, hardening of school facilities and the presence of school resource or armed safety officers.”

The legislative agenda includes 18 proposed bills to address a wide range of issues from school safety plans to mental health awareness. Most of the bills have been referred to the Public Safety and Security Committee and Education Committee for public hearings and drafting.

“Our legislative agenda represents a holistic approach to tackling the issue of increasing safety in our schools,” said **Rep. Borer**. “Announcing this agenda is far from the end of the conversation or the end of this working group. As legislators, we should be constantly reviewing and reexamining our measures of school security in the state so that our children can focus on dreaming about their futures rather than fearing for their lives.”

Rep. Sredzinski shared, “We convened this Working Group to ask the question: ‘is Connecticut is doing everything possible to keep our children safe at school’. Overall, we are doing a good job, but there are clear areas in which we can make structural improvements that reinforce a safe and productive environment for all children in our state to learn in. We can make improvements

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in terms of emergency response coordination, training, and the implementation of safety plans. I look forward to shepherding these ideas through the legislative process in the coming months.” The School Security Working Group plans to advocate for the bill proposals during the legislative session and will continue working as needed.

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