

Comment Report

HF 2586

A bill for an act relating to school security, including the use of school security personnel by school districts and authorizing school employees to be issued professional permits to carry weapons, and including effective date provisions. (Formerly HSB 675.) Effective date: 04/19/2024, 07/01/2024.

Subcommittee Members: Evans-CH, Garrett, Quirmbach

Date: 03/06/2024

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: Room G15

Name: Shannon Patrick

Comment: One reliable indicator that something is a bad idea is when the insurance companies require an exception. U.S. schools don't have so many more shootings than the rest of the world because their teachers are better armed. Guns in schools introduce new risks, armed teachers are a serious complication for first responders, and Iowa would be better off if the legislature spent at least equal time and effort addressing the root causes of the problem. It also speaks volumes that the Iowa Peace Officers' Association has not endorsed this bill.

Name: Diane Duncan-Goldsmith

Comment: HF 2586 is not the answer to keeping students and staff safe at school; more guns in schools is not the answer. The only way to address gun violence in schools is a systemwide approach. Putting guns in schools simply puts Iowas children in harms way. How many guns would this be? Where will they be stored and accessed? How would first responders differentiate armed school district employees from an active shooter? Insurance companies already believe this is a bad idea. According to the Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, Iowas Gun Law Scorecard receives a grade of F. The vast majority of Iowans, including Iowans who own guns and law enforcement all support commonsense gun laws. This would include the following: Banning assault weapons and largecapacity magazines. Enacting universal background checks through gun owner licensing. Passing an extreme risk protection order law and banning ghost guns. The focus should be on working to pass sensible gun laws and not putting an untold number of guns in school buildings. Just ask the parents of the children killed in Uvalde, Texas when armed police arrived, how more guns in a school protected their children.

Name: Jane Jensen

Comment: I have worked in public schools for 25 years and currently provide services to support schools with students that have challenging behavior. We are constantly surveying the environment for dangerous objects that could be weapons. Kids have been able to find and use scissors, staplers, hammers, desks, chairs, and table legs to injure other children and adults at school. With fewer resources for children outside of public school we have to be prepared to respond to highly escalated and unstable behavior. Having to a gun anywhere in the building is the scariest situation in my mind. I have witnessed escalated children attempt to disarm police officers in the school building and it terrified me. Our best resolution is to prevent children from being armed, which would mean not having guns available to them. Additionally, pulling a gun on a child; a student, would take extreme training and self restraint that is beyond what would be available to school staff. Please kill this bill immediately and look for ways to support protect students and school personnel that dont include resorting to the ways of the Wild West.

Name: Mary Zirkelbach

Comment: Vote no on this bill. Children can use many things as weapons. Having staff with guns in school is not right. As an Iowa educator I feel that we need to listen more, care more, and find help . Keep open dialogue with students and parents. Provide services, such as AEA has offered to improve the emotional and social behaviors. Please vote no. No guns on school property.