

State of Kansas
House of Representatives

State Capitol, 167-W
Topeka, Kansas 66612
(785) 296-7557
eric.smith@house.ks.gov



627 Kennebec St.
Burlington, Kansas 66839
(620) 490-1458
elsmith4hd76@gmail.com

Eric L. Smith
Representative, 76th District

Chairman and Members of the Committee,

I thank you for the opportunity to testify on the Kansas Safe and Secure Schools Act. I give support to this bill based on several perspectives derived from my own experiences. The two FTE positions in the department of education are essential to making this a proactive program.

It is my genuine belief that the number one, most important thing that we can accomplish is to demand a working relationship between schools and local law enforcement. A clear and negotiated understanding between these two entities is essential to a response that is more likely to succeed. Familiarity of the schools and the policies and methods employed by the schools in various states of emergency response will educate our first responders in how to best aid the administration in an effective response, overall.

Second, our schools need to have the financial ability to become security hardened to a reasonable level, so that we can -first- exclude any opportunistic attempts by intruders to disrupt or cause harm to our teachers and students. Asking for the ability to remotely monitor entryways, hallways, commons areas, outer access areas, and major traffic areas is a must to have any chance to identify threats that may approach. The \$5 million is an estimate that we can more easily work from. Third, education of our schools on security and realistic means of increasing their defenses in any type of emergency is a practice we have known for generations. If we acknowledge that we are willing to prepare for natural disasters and fire, we must also prepare for other known threats that know no lines of discrimination by type or size. Metro or rural, we are all vulnerable.

Last, education of our children in safety with firearms has been an essential in our country for decades. For over 100 years, we have had organized safety related to the use of firearms and, for the younger children, a basic means of deciding what to do when they come across an unattended firearm. Simply teaching a child, "STOP", "DON'T TOUCH", "RUN AWAY", and "TELL AN ADULT" is NOT an encouragement to handle firearms or even show firearms in any favorable light. Eddie Eagle is a program that has been successful for years without political overtones, and, it is free while encouraging interaction with local law enforcement. But, if that is still too much to ask, the school may use an evidence based curriculum similar in purpose or chose not to teach firearm safety at all.

As a law enforcement officer who has spent 24 years in training for active shooters and defenses, I am in support of this bill.

Rep. Eric L. Smith

