

Moniz-Carroll, Rhonda

From: Maureen Reidy <breidy1@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2015 9:44 PM
To: JudTestimony
Cc: Sen. Hwang, Tony
Subject: Support SB 1108

Dear Chairman Coleman, Chairman Tong and Esteemed Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Maureen Reidy and I am writing in support of SB 1108, the Zero-Tolerance Safe School Environment Act. I am a mother of two children who attend St. Rose of Lima School in Newtown, CT. I fully support strengthening penalties for those who commit crimes that make serious threats against our schools. I would just like to share a few personal experiences to shed some light on what its like to live through "threats" after 12/14. Since the tragedy at Sandy Hook School, St. Rose has experienced several "phoned in" threats both to the Church and to the school. Our children have witnessed police and swat teams, with weapons drawn, searching the perimeter of the school/church campus upon dismissal, having priests and police escort them to their cars. Police/swat teams have rushed the school building yelling at staff/students to "get down." Children and teachers have had to hide behind and under desks, in closets for extended periods of time experiencing all kinds of anxiety and fear that 12/14 is happening all over again. On November 14, 2014 a threat was called in to St. Rose School, the school went into lockdown and many children were eating lunch in the Gathering Hall. Some were actually about to head outdoors for recess. The children were quickly ordered to get into the gym equipment closet and the chair closet in the Hall as well as the kitchen. There were two fifth grade classes in one closet with staff members, two 4th grade classes in another and both third grade classes hiding in the kitchen trying to stay away from the windows. Children were crying, wetting their pants, and filled with anxiety and fear realizing that this wasn't a drill. There are devastating emotional effects on the children and staff involved when a threat occurs. The trauma of these lock downs lasts significantly longer than the school day and the traumatic experience. They undermine a child's sense of security and the psychological effects can be seen for weeks, even months after the lockdown occurs. We see this happen in our own children in the form of nightmares, bed-wetting, fear of being alone or going to bed at night, fear of going to school. This emotional reaction is triggered by the flashbacks of that horrific day. Each time a threat is called in and a lockdown occurs, it has serious adverse effects on the children, teachers and parents. It is a terrible feeling as a parent to receive that dreaded text message, phone call or email that your child's school is in lockdown. Please pass this bill, SB 1108 that there will be Zero Tolerance when it comes to threatening our schools and our children and teachers.

Thank you,
Maureen Reidy
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