Bill No.: HB-7356
Title: AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL SECURITY.
Vote Date: 3/25/2019
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 3/18/2019
File No.: 

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SPONSORS OF BILL:
Education Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:
This bill would expand allowed uses of school security infrastructure competitive grants to include paying armed school security officers and installing doors that can be locked from inside the classroom.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:
This substitute language would make this bill strictly a task force to study the training and arming of school security officers and the efficiency of school security improvements through the means of installing classroom door locks.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:
Commissioner, Dianna R. Wentzell, State of Connecticut, State Department of Education (SDE):
Commissioner Wentzall supports the implementation of school security infrastructure grants for child care and preschools; this should be added to the Office of Early Childhood grant review committee. Commissioner Wentzall requests that the timeline for the task force outlined in this bill be extended so that it can be sufficiently researched and reviewed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:
Kate Field, Michele Ridolfi O'Neil, Connecticut Education Association (CEA):
CEA supports sections one, reimbursing grants for school security and two a task force to study arming school security officers. CEA opposes section three of this proposal and states
that the committee should consider the unintentional consequence of teachers getting locked out of their classrooms by students.

**Superintendent, Co-Chair, Matthew Conway, Derby Public Schools, Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS):**

Superintendent Conway supports security reimbursement grants and a task force to study the authorization and training of school security officers to hold a firearm.

**President, Douglas M. Curtiss, Sonitrol New England:**

Sonitrol New England is a Connecticut based security service company. Sonitrol supports allowing school districts to use school security infrastructure competitive grant program funds. In their testimony, Sonitrol outlines best practice safety standards which include state of the art video surveillance and alarm triggers which expedite the sharing of interior and exterior school intel to first responders. Fast intel and alarms lead to fast responses by first responders and saved time saves lives.

**Joseph Mazzarella, Mutualink Inc.**

Mr. Mazzarella supports this bill on behalf of Mutualink Inc. which is a Connecticut based multimedia communications company. Mutualink Inc. has assisted thousands of schools in Florida and schools in Santa Fe, Texas. Mutualink Inc. describes in its testimony how an video and alarm system could be implemented in a Connecticut school which focuses on streamlining notification and the sharing of intel to first responders. Fast intel and alarms lead to fast responses by first responders and saved time saves lives.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**The Connecticut Parent Teacher Association (CT PTA):**

CT PTA opposes this bill. Although the CT PTA supports reimbursement grants for security projects in schools, they oppose arming security officers. The CT PTA requests to be included in the Task Force proposed in this bill.

**Executive Director, David McGuire, American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut (ACLU-CT):**

ACLU opposes this bill because they believe police officers in schools will not be conducive to a positive educational environment. ACLU argues that armed security officers will more likely harm students than intruders. Police have used force on students before and it disproportionately afflicts minority and disabled students. There should be less negative interactions between students and police officers and more positive interactions with counselors, psychologists, social workers, and nurses. ACLU recommends the ratio of one guidance counselor for every two hundred fifty students.

**Reported by:** Colin Carroll

**Date:** 3/26/19