

LET'S STOP THE PLAN TO ARM CLASSROOM TEACHERS NOW!

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES!

It was just a year ago, in response to the tragedy at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, that bipartisan gun safety legislation was passed and signed into law by then-Governor Rick Scott. Although this legislation did not cover all firearms-related issues, it did address several major concerns: increasing the age to purchase a long gun to 21; mandating a 3-day waiting period; and banning bump stocks. After much discussion and compromise, it also created the Coach Aaron Feis Guardian Program, allowing school districts to designate employees to receive training and carry arms on school grounds. **Public pressure forced legislators to abandon an initial proposal to allow full-time classroom teachers to participate in the Guardian Program.**

It is time for us in PTA, and for our families, our friends, and our neighbors, to raise our voices once again. Next Tuesday, February 12—nearly one year to the day after the massacre in Parkland—the Senate Education will consider a far-reaching proposal (SPB 7030) to sweep away last year's bipartisan compromise, and ignore the will of the public. In short, it would completely eliminate the restriction on arming classroom teachers.

Parents, students, and teachers themselves have clearly voiced their objections: they have stated repeatedly that they do not want classroom teachers carrying guns on school grounds. National PTA's position statement on Gun Safety and Violence Prevention echoes this stance:

National PTA believes the most effective day-to-day school climate to be gun-free, but defers to local collaborative decision-making to allow for the presence of law enforcement deployed in community-oriented policing.

In short, common sense dictates that teachers should focus on teaching, and school safety should be left to the professionals, like the sworn law enforcement officers who make up the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Police force.

PTA is first and foremost an advocacy organization, and we in Miami Dade County Council PTA/PTSA need your help--and your voice--in advocating for your child and for every child. Please join us in reaching out **before noon tomorrow** to the members of the Senate Education Committee listed below. Please ask them to reject the idea of arming teachers.

Senate Education Committee

Chair, Manny Diaz	diaz.manny@flsenate.gov @SenMannyDiazJr	(850) 487-5036
V.Chair, Bill Montford	montford.bill@flsenate.gov @bill_montford	(850) 487-5003
Dennis Baxley	baxley.dennis@flsenate.gov @dennisbaxley	(850) 487-5012
Lori Berman	berman.lori@flsenate.gov @loriberman	(850) 487-5031
Janet Cruz	cruz.janet@flsenate.gov @SenJanetCruz	(850) 487-5018
Keith Perry	perry.keith@flsenate.gov @KeithPerryFL	(850) 487-5008
David Simmons	simmons david@flsenate.gov @DSimmonsFL	(850) 487-5009
Kelli Stargel	stargel.kelli@flsenate.gov @kellistargel	(850) 487-5022

Sample Email/Phone Message (feel free to use your own words)

Dear Senator _____,

I am a Florida voter, and I am opposed to SPB 7030 because it expands the Guardian Program to include arming teachers. Parents do not want teachers carrying guns; teachers themselves do not want to carry guns; and students have stated they do not want their teachers to be armed. The only people to carry firearms on school campuses should be highly-trained law enforcement or school resource officers.

Thank you,
(sign name)

Suggested Tweet

Arm teachers with paper and pencils...not guns. @ (all Senators listed above)

PLEASE FORWARD TO ALL WHO MAY BE INTERESTED

Beth Edwards, VP of Advocacy & Legislation
Eileen Segal, Legislative Chair
Mindy Gould, Advocacy Chair