

Konrad Jackson

From: Alexandria Weddell <alexandriaweddell@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 3:14 PM
To: Senate.Labor.And.Commerce@akleg.go
Subject: Senate Bill 173

Good afternoon,

My name is Alex Weddell, and I am a mother of a school aged child and a registered Alaska voter and year round citizen. I am writing in opposition of SB 173. Arming teachers is not the answer.

There are good reasons why arming teachers is opposed by school safety experts, teachers, and law enforcement. First, when a gun is in the classroom, students can get access to it. There have been multiple incidents of students and teachers finding misplaced firearms: in bathrooms, locker rooms, even sporting events. The notion of a highly trained teacher armed with a gun, able to respond as quickly as trained law enforcement is a myth. Law enforcement officers receive hundreds of hours of training but in states that have laws to arm school personnel, school staff receive much less training.

Please do not bring guns into our schools where children might accidentally gain access and cause injury. I would remind everyone of the 2022 incident in Anchorage where a child gained access to a firearm and killed himself and 3 other children ([here is the news article](#)).

Please instead support efforts to promote safe gun storage, and high risk or red flag laws. We need to protect our children, and bringing guns into the schools is not the answer. Guns should not be anywhere near schools.

Thank you for considering my plea.

Alexandria Weddell

Konrad Jackson

From: Ann Gifford <agifford83@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 11:09 AM
To: Senate Labor and Commerce
Subject: Fwd: Please vote no on SB 173

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Re-sending due to typo in email address

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Ann Gifford** <agifford83@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Jan 24, 2024 at 10:58 AM
Subject: Please vote no on SB 173
To: <Senate.Labor.And.Commerce@akleg.gov>, <Senator.Jesse.Bjorkman@akleg.gov>, <Senator.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov>, <Senator.Elvi.Gray-Jackson@akleg.gov>, <Senator.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>, <Senator.Forrest.Dunbar@akleg.gov>

Dear members of the Senate Labor and Commerce Committee,

Please do not support or pass SB 173 out of your committee. This bill would force schools to assign at least one teacher or staff person – or even a volunteer – to concealed carry a gun at school, if the person is willing to do it, receives some firearm training that the school district has to pay for, and meets some minimum physical and mental standards set by the school board.

SB 173 doesn't leave any discretion for school officials to decide that it is not a good idea for someone to carry a gun at school if they meet the minimum standards and are the only person willing to do so.

That is a terrible idea. I can tell you as a former school attorney that there is no way to write a policy under this bill that would preserve the discretion principals and other school officials need. Someone could be a great math teacher, but absent-minded or accident prone. Someone could be great with little kids but not great in situations involving conflict with a teenager or adult. Yet, if that person met the minimum standards and was the only person at the school who wanted to carry a gun, this bill would require the school to "grant" them the assignment to do that.

Teachers and school staff have their hands full teaching, maintaining order in the classroom and trying to keep kids safe on a normal day. We shouldn't expect them to take on the role of police officers.

One short training program is not enough to give someone the skills they need to make life and death decisions about shooting or not shooting in a school shooter emergency. Even the hundreds of hours of training police officers typically receive isn't always enough, as we saw to our horror during the Uvalde, Texas school shooting.

Bringing guns into school increases the possibility of people getting injured through an accidental discharge, a gun getting misplaced or stolen, or a person with a gun shooting someone by mistake.

We need to do more to keep guns out of our schools. Please focus your time and attention on laws that would help do that, like HB 164 on secure storage of guns and HB 162 on extreme risk protection orders.

Thank you for your service to our state. Sincerely, Ann Gifford

--

Ann Gifford
Juneau, Alaska
(907) 723-7128

--

Ann Gifford
Juneau, Alaska
(907) 723-7128

Konrad Jackson

From: Annette Marley <marley.annette@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 10:39 PM
To: Senate.Labor.And.Commerce@akleg.go; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: Oppose SB 173

Dear Senate Labor and Commerce Committee Members:

Please vote against passage of SB 173. Requiring schools to assign people to bring in guns to the school puts our children more at risk. There is no place in schools for guns. The additional immunity these assigned gun carriers would have against legal liability if harm is caused by their weapon makes it even easier for them to be used even more freely with few repercussions. There is no evidence that guns in schools will keep students safer; on the contrary, it will pose additional risk to all.

My children are already terrified of a school shooting in ways that I never felt as a student because in recent decades, due to the power of the NRA, we have sanctioned easier access to guns by those who should not have access, including children. If you truly want to prevent gun violence at schools, you should support HB162 and HB164, both of which provide evidence-based ways to keep guns out of the hands of children and those who pose a risk of harm to themselves or others.

More guns are not the answer to gun violence. Sensible legislation is.

Thank you for considering what is in our children's, teachers, and other school personnel's best interest.

Sincerely,

Annette Marley, MPH
marley.annette@gmail.com
907-244-220

Konrad Jackson

From: Annie Pfahl <annie.pfahl@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 8:57 AM
To: Senate Labor and Commerce
Subject: please oppose SB 173

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hello,

I am writing my representatives to ask that they please oppose SB 173. I am a family physician in Anchorage, and I regularly see the terrible effects of gun violence (both intentional and unintentional) on my patients and their families. Schools should be a place for safe learning for all of our children, and guns have no place there. Placing guns in K-12 schools exposes students and staff to increased risk of unintentional shootings. No amount of teacher, staff, or volunteer training can make up for the harms caused by introducing more guns in schools. Placing guns in schools will also lead to students accessing teachers' guns. Alaska should be focusing on implementing school safety proposals that are proven to keep kids safe, not those that would put them at greater risk. I urge you to reject SB 173 and instead pass HB 164.

Thank you for your time.
Anna Jo Pfahl, MD
1361 Hillcrest Drive #104
Anchorage, AK 99503

Konrad Jackson

From: April Rochford <medea_lynne@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 5:02 PM
To: Senate.Labor.And.Commerce@akleg.go; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: SB173 absolutely appalling

Hello,

I am writing to express my concerns about SB173 which is having a hearing in your committee tomorrow. It is surprising to me that this bill is allowed a hearing at all to be honest. Gun safety bills often do not see the light of day in our State Legislature, but every time a bill is introduced that supports irresponsible and dangerous legislation regarding the presence of guns in our communities it seems that those bills are given more thought and time than those that are aimed at protecting us from rampant gun violence.

In case you couldn't tell yet, I strongly oppose this bill and I can only hope that you are all also opposed to it. There is not a single parent I know that wants to see teachers, school staff, or worse VOLUNTEERS strutting around school campuses with concealed handguns. Not to mention it would be on the schools to provide the funds needed for training...but we aren't even funding our schools!

This bill is...frankly, quite stupid. If the Legislature is truly concerned about protecting our kids in schools then I would suggest support the safe storage bill and the ERPO bill that are both eager for the support of the legislature this year.

Please do us all a favor and do not allow this bill to advance.

Sincerely,
April Rochford
907-782-6533
99503

Konrad Jackson

From: Barbara Dunham <bjdunham@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 5:06 PM
To: Senate.Labor.And.Commerce@akleg.go; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: Opposition to SB 173

Dear Senators,

I'm writing in opposition to SB 173, with the exception of section 5. Sections 1-4, requiring armed personnel in Alaska's schools, represent an unnecessary expenditure of our already scarce school resources. While I understand wanting to keep kids safe, I don't think this is the way to do it. Requiring at least one gun to be on a school campus at all times increases the risk of gun violence if the gun gets into the wrong hands. We should leave law enforcement to law enforcement officers and let school personnel focus on education.

Section 5 of SB 173 makes sense and should be a separate bill.

To decrease the likelihood of gun violence in schools, I would ask instead that you support HB 164 and/or HB 162, to help keep guns out of reach of children and dangerous persons.

Sincerely,
Barbara Dunham
Anchorage, 99518

Konrad Jackson

From: Beth Leban <coleevan9@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 9:45 AM
To: Senate Labor and Commerce; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: Oppose SB 173 - it's a Bad Idea

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Legislator,

Please oppose SB 173. It's a bad idea to arm teachers and school staff. Having access to a gun in the classroom increases the likelihood that a student will access a gun and that someone will be shot outside of an active shooter incident. Schools are places for books and backpacks, not weapons. Instead, we need proven solutions that are backed by data, and that intervene before violence occurs.

As someone who has worked in schools for more than 15 years, arming teachers and staff is NOT a viable solution. Let's work together instead to protect our schools through pro-active measures.

Please support [secure gun storage laws \(HB 164\)](#) and [extreme risk laws \(HB 162\)](#) as a much safer approach to protecting children.

Beth Leban

Konrad Jackson

From: Bill Tremblay <brtrembla@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 9:39 AM
To: Senate Labor and Commerce; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Senator.Forrest.Dunbar@alkeg.gov
Subject: Opposing SB 173 -Allowing Guns in Schools

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

First, to get this out of the way, I am a gun owner and am a victim of gun violence (my brother was unintentionally shot by his best friend).

Schools should be a safe place to learn. Allowing guns into schools only allows for more potential accidents to occur. Instead of burdening our underfunded schools with another meaningless course of direction, I'd suggest you support other legislation like,

HB 164 - The Alaska Child Access Prevention and 7 Secure Storage of Firearms Act. While I understand how the accident that killed my brother occurred, it could have been prevented if there had been more information or emphasis on gun storage safety.

HB 162 - Legislation to better enforce protective orders to prevent violence. A legal avenue to avoid harm that is sorely needed.

Other actions that could help would be to provide additional funding (beyond a reasonable Base Student Allocation) to do critical assessments of schools for safety and to provide funding to implement needed upgrades. Our school in Petersburg recently changed their access to their schools based on student threats to staff or other students. Given the number of guns owned in this State, you'd think there would be more focus on prevention instead of putting guns in the middle of where they're not needed.

Many Alaskan's rely on firearms for their personal safety or to help sustain their lifestyle. Passing reasonable laws that provide for the protection of others should be a priority.

Bill Tremblay
P.O. Box 662
Petersburg, AK 99833
(907) 772-4461.

Konrad Jackson

From: Bridget Smith <bridgetannsmith49@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 9:18 AM
To: Senate.Labor.And.Commerce@akleg.go; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: SB 173

Dear Senators:

I oppose SB 173 as I believe that it would endanger students and staff rather than protect them. We know that the “good guy with a gun” is not a proven solution to gun violence; in fact, it creates more danger. Arming teachers and staff is a bad idea. Instead, look at HB 164 and HB 162 as ways to protect children.

Thank you,

Bridget Smith
137 6TH ST.
Juneau, AK 99801
bridgetannsmith49@gmail.com
Cell (907) 209-0025

Konrad Jackson

From: Christy Everett <christyeverett.personal@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 9:51 AM
To: Senate Labor and Commerce
Cc: Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: Testimony opposing SB 173

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Members of the Senate Labor and Commerce Committee:

As a resident, mother, grandmother and voter in North Pole, Alaska for over 36 years, I am writing to strongly oppose SB 173, which would **require** Alaskan public K-12 schools to arm teachers, staff and/or volunteers. All of us want to prevent school shootings, but this is a bad bill in several ways.

1. Alaskan law already permits school administrators to allow guns on school grounds. The fact that none have done so only emphasizes that guns on school grounds are a bad idea. The teachers and staff I have spoken to are strongly opposed to this idea, and they are the most knowledgeable about the school environment.
2. Teachers, staff and volunteers are not trained law enforcement officers, and are very unlikely to respond appropriately in high stress situations, even with the training requirements included in the bill.
3. The training requirements are another unfunded mandate for our already severely underfunded school systems.
4. The bill provides immunity to participants in the program unless a high standard of gross negligence can be met. If my child or grandchild is injured by a gun-carrying teacher, staff or volunteer, I want legal recourse. In other states with similar laws guns have been misplaced and students have been able to access them. Again, the more guns in schools, the higher chance of fatal incidents.

There are two other bills under consideration, HB 164, which supports secure gun storage, and HB 162, which allows courts to issue and law enforcement officials to enforce protective orders preventing possession of firearms by individuals who are a danger to themselves or others (red flag law). These bills are much more likely to prevent school shootings than SB 173.

Please oppose SB 173 and support HB 162 and HB 164, for the sake of our children. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Christine Everett
2308 Robinson Circle
North Pole, AK 99705
907-460-0941

Konrad Jackson

From: Cohen Kathryn <phoenix@alaskan.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 10:46 AM
To: Senate Labor and Commerce
Subject: SB 173

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Senators

Please **OPPOSE** this bill. It will make schools more dangerous not less. More guns at schools is not a solution to violence. Supporting red flag laws, secure gun storage laws would go much further. This is a step in the wrong direction. My grandchildren attend these schools and they will be more at risk if their teachers are armed. It terrifies me to think of armed instructors around my grandkids. Perhaps in some instances school may need to hire security guards but in any case, these should be the decision of the schools themselves and their administrators. The state has no business requiring teachers to carry guns. Please do not pass this bill.

Thank you for your attention.

Kathryn Cohen
52 year resident of Alaska.

Konrad Jackson

From: Colin F <colinflynnak@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 10:10 AM
To: Senate Labor and Commerce
Subject: SB NO. 173 Testimony - 33rd Session

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hi. My name is Colin Flynn and I'm calling in today to voice my strong opposition to this bill.

I grew up in Juneau – was born at Bartlett regional hospital and graduated from Juneau Douglas High School in 2008. I left the state for some years and then returned to Juneau in 2020 with my wife. Our daughter was born at Bartlett in 2021. She attends a preschool here in town while we both work full time jobs.

I grew up duck hunting on the Mendenhall wetlands and have a strong appreciation for the value of firearms in our Alaskan communities. Deer and moose hunting are big in Juneau and protection from bears is often required. I have no desire for the government to take people's guns away.

Every school shooting in this country puts my daughter into sharp focus. And every time the police shoot an innocent person the danger of firearms also comes into focus. Police officers are highly trained individuals and even they make mistakes, deadly ones. Putting a gun into the hands of a random school employee and expecting them to appropriately respond to an active shooter is outrageous. This would be the most stressful moment of that individual's life. The bill requires a single firearms training course. If there's a gun in my daughter's classroom, that gun will become the most dangerous thing in her life. It is difficult for me to understand the reckless nature of this bill and the danger it poses to our children and our communities. If you want to support our kids, start funding their schools.

Thank you for the time and for all you do on this committee.

Coin Flynn
755 5th ST
Douglas, AK 99824

Konrad Jackson

From: DeAnna Koranda <deedlette@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 9:02 PM
To: Senate Labor and Commerce
Subject: SB173

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Committee Members,

I am 100% in Favor of SB173 The Safe Schools Act.

It is unacceptable to let our children remain sitting ducks in Gun Free Zones. I think this bill is the Best move forward to keep our children as safe as possible, in this crazy world.

Please pass SB173 Safe Schools Act.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

DeAnna Koranda
Wasilla

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPad](#)

Konrad Jackson

From: Diane DeSloover <dianedesloover@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 8:52 AM
To: Senate Labor and Commerce
Cc: Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: SB 173

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

To the Senate Labor and Commerce Committee:

I am a retired elementary teacher with the Juneau School District, my daughter and son-in-law are currently teachers and four of my grandchildren are students in public schools. Therefore, I have a huge interest in safeguarding our schools.

I believe that SB 173 would expose our schools to increased danger. Any gun in a school poses the risk of getting into the wrong hands. We've all heard the stories of guns in homes resulting in tragic accidents. There is no reason to believe that a gun in a staff member's possession can't ever be found and used dangerously and no guarantee that more guns in staff members' possession will reduce gun incidents in schools.

We currently have HB 164 up for consideration, the Alaska Child Access Prevention and Secure Storage of Firearms Act. This law would actually help keep guns out of schools and prevent school shootings by reducing the risk of children accessing firearms.

Let's not buy into the myth that more guns make us safer and put the added burden on schools to train employees to use guns on school grounds. Rather, may all efforts go toward creating learning communities where every child is seen, accepted for who they are and valued equally. That is what will reduce gun violence in schools. Please reject SB 173.

Respectfully,
Diane DeSloover
Juneau resident since 1977

Konrad Jackson

From: efoylesaft@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 10:01 AM
To: Eileen Foyle-saft; Senate.Labor.And.Commerce@asleg.gov; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Click Bishop; Senator.Elvi.Gray-Jackso@akleg.gov; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: Re: SB173

On Wednesday, January 24, 2024 at 09:58:09 AM AKST, efoylesaft@aol.com <efoylesaft@aol.com> wrote:

The purpose of this email is to ask you to reconsider this bill. More guns in the school does not and will not promote safety for our students and education staff.

I am a retired school teacher and member of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. Requiring schools to assign a staff member to carry a gun on school grounds is a recipe for disaster.

I urge you to carefully consider the ramifications of this proposed bill.

Parents and grandparents do not want to see more guns in the schools.

Yours,

Eileen Foyle-Saft

Konrad Jackson

From: Frank Rue <frankrue44@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 11:18 AM
To: Senate Labor and Commerce
Cc: Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov; Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: Oppose SB 173

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Senators,

My name is Frank Rue. I have been an Alaska resident for 47 years. Both of my children were educated in the Juneau and Anchorage public school systems. I am a gun owner and advocate for secure storage, hunter safety and other programs that teach safe and responsible gun ownership.

I urge you **NOT** to support SB 173.

Experience elsewhere has shown that arming teachers, or volunteers in schools has not stopped school violence, but instead increased the risk of harm to students and staff.

Instead, urge you to support actions that are proven to reduce the risk of school and other shootings.

I urge you to support adequate school funding so that teachers and other school staff have the capacity to teach and create a school environment that supports all kids. Help create schools where children feel safe and able to get help when they are in crisis.

I urge you to support secure storage laws (HB164) and secure storage education programs that are effective in keeping guns away from people in crisis, particularly youth 18 and under, who are most likely to be the ones to be school shooters.

I urge you to support extreme risk protection orders (HB162) that will allow the courts to intervene when friends, parents, spouses or others are not able to, and temporarily remove guns from someone in crisis and threatening to harm themselves or others.

The decision whether to have a law enforcement presence at schools should be made by local school districts working with local law enforcement and local government in deciding how they can make their schools secure.

Thank you for your consideration and your concern for the safety of our children.

Sincerely,

Frank Rue
7083 Hendrickson Rd
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Konrad Jackson

From: Heidi McCroskey Heimerl <heidi.mccroskey@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 12:01 PM
To: Senate.Labor.And.Commerce@akleg.go; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: Strong opposition to SB 173

Dear legislators,

I am disheartened that we continue to think more guns (especially around children) will equal safety. I strongly oppose Senate Bill 173.

I currently have two young students in our public school system and next year I will have three. They are my babies and I trust the public school in which they attend to take great care of them while they are away from me. However, over the last 7 plus years I have watched as our school staff carry a very heavy burden on their shoulders. School staff have had to become everything for our children and youth, including a teacher, mentor, coach, support system, and now we want them to be law enforcement as well. How does this make sense?

Arming teachers with guns is opposed by school safety experts, law enforcement, and teachers. When a gun is in the classroom, students have access to it. We've seen multiple incidents of students and teachers finding misplaced firearms in bathrooms, locker rooms, and sporting events. The notion of a highly trained teacher armed with a gun, able to respond as quickly as trained law enforcement is a myth. Law enforcement officers receive hundreds of hours of training but in states that have laws to arm school personnel, school staff receive much less training. Our school staff currently have limited time for training on how to do their primary job: educate.

Do we want our teachers to educate our students or live in fear that they may have to use a gun to keep their students safe? Our school staff already worry about so much more than they should ever have to worry about. We have a growing school staff retention challenge due to lack of sustained funding for public education. Do we know what will increase safety in schools? Funding public education to ensure school staff feel supported to do their job and educate their students in creative ways. With the flat state funding and continued immense pressure on our school staff to perform, we have lost creativity in learning and how to be in community with one another. Please do the right thing and advocate for funding for the next generation of kiddos instead.

Thank you,
Heidi M Heimerl
99502

--

Heidi McCroskey Heimerl
heidi.mccroskey@gmail.com

"May we not just grieve, but give; May we not just ache, but act; May our signed right to bear arms, Never blind our sight from shared harm; May we choose our children over chaos. May another innocent never be lost. Maybe everything hurts, Our hearts shadowed & strange, But only when everything hurts, May everything change."

-- Amanda Gorman, Hymn for the Hurting

Konrad Jackson

From: Jan Caulfield <janiceacaulfield@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 5:10 PM
To: Senate Labor and Commerce; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: SB 173 - Public comment in OPPOSITION to SB 173

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

To: Alaska Senate Labor and Commerce Committee,

I am a 45 year resident of Alaska. My two young adult children attended Juneau public schools from preschool through HS. I served on school site councils and was a frequent parent volunteer.

I am writing in opposition to SB 173 – and to the intent stated in this bill that the concealed carry of firearms on school grounds by school staff or volunteers would augment responses by law enforcement during a crisis.

I wonder if this committee has consulted with law enforcement entities about this bill. I cannot imagine that they want to be in the position of going in to an active shooter situation, encountering armed teachers or parent volunteers, and having to manage these armed but inexperienced “pseudo-responders” while trying to stop a shooter. That’s a recipe for chaos, confusion, and lethality.

No school staff member or volunteer will ever receive sufficient training to cope with an active shooter in a school. The Buckeye Firearms Foundation referred to in this bill offers three-day courses on preparedness to school staff and volunteers. Compare that with the months of preparatory training received by law enforcement personnel in Alaska, and their on-the-job experience that hones their judgement on how to rapidly assess and respond to a crisis situation. No armed teacher, staff member or volunteer will ever have this capability or judgement.

Guns in schools make children and staff less safe – increasing the potential for students or others to access guns within the building, and raising the potential for intentional shootings or lethal accidents.

If the Legislature really wants to address the issue of reducing gun violence, including reducing the number of deaths of innocent children in school shootings, there are measures that have proven successful in other states. These include laws such as those proposed in two bills currently before this Legislature: HB 164 the Alaska Child Access Prevention and Secure Storage of Firearms bill, and HB 162 which would establish emergency protective orders (sometimes called a “red flag law”) for Alaska.

Finally, I note that this bill has not even been referred to the Senate Education Committee. Why is that? It seems like a major omission given their responsibility to help govern the education of children in our state and the safety of school communities.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments, and thank you for offering an opportunity for public testimony on this bill at the January 24 hearing in your Committee.

Best regards,

Jan Caulfield
Juneau, AK
907-209-8604
janiceacaulfield@gmail.com

Konrad Jackson

From: Jean McBrien <jnogma@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 9:48 AM
To: Senate Labor and Commerce
Cc: Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: Handguns in schools

Nothing good can come from Senate Bill 173. The idea of having teachers and/or staff carrying a handgun is totally ridiculous - the liability is astronomical.

Schools need to have the funds to ensure that no-one can gain un-authorized access to a building. Put funds behind prevention: cameras at every entrance, strict enforcement of locked entrances, classrooms that lock from the INSIDE, and, if needed, airport-like screening to gain access to the building. Yes - this costs money and you have the power to make it happen.

Please do not move this bill forward!

Jean Marie McBrien
300 Hermit St. #14
Juneau, AK 99801
907-321-5885

Konrad Jackson

From: Jean McBrien <jnogma@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 9:48 AM
To: Senate Labor and Commerce
Cc: Sen. Jesse Bjorkman; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: Handguns in schools

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Nothing good can come from Senate Bill 173. The idea of having teachers and/or staff carrying a handgun is totally ridiculous - the liability is astronomical.

Schools need to have the funds to ensure that no-one can gain un-authorized access to a building. Put funds behind prevention: cameras at every entrance, strict enforcement of locked entrances, classrooms that lock from the INSIDE, and, if needed, airport-like screening to gain access to the building. Yes - this costs money and you have the power to make it happen.

Please do not move this bill forward!

Jean Marie McBrien
300 Hermit St. #14
Juneau, AK 99801
907-321-5885

Konrad Jackson

From: Jim Simard <simard.jim@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 4:21 PM
Subject: Opposed to Senate Bill 173

Dear Senator:

I firmly oppose SB173. I believe that introducing more firearms to Alaskan Schools can only lead to more gun violence.

Instead, please support [secure gun storage laws \(HB 164\)](#) and [extreme risk laws \(HB 162\)](#). These proposed laws can actually reduce the tragically high incidents of gun deaths among Alaska's youth and adults.

Sincerely, James Simard
503 5th st
Juneau, AK