

# Legislative History for Connecticut Act

## PA 16-171

SB236

Senate 929, 931-932 3

Public Safety & Security 493-495, 552-556, 688-690 11

House Transcripts have not been received. They are available on CGA website, but are not the Official copy. Contact House Clerk for assistance (860) 240-0400 **14**

**Transcripts from the Joint Standing Committee Public Hearing(s) and/or Senate and House of Representatives Proceedings**

**Connecticut State Library  
Compiled 2017**

**S - 693**

**CONNECTICUT  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS  
2016**

**VOL. 59  
PART 3  
679 – 1032**

cf  
SENATE

251  
April 20, 2016

Seeing no objections, so ordered sir.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. On calendar page 4, Calendar 183, Senate Bill 236, I'd like to place that item on our Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objections, so ordered sir.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, and on page -- calendar page 8, Calendar 254, Senate Bill 178, I'd like to place that item on our Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objections, so ordered sir.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

On calendar page 8, Calendar 263, Senate Bill 252, I'd like to place that item on our Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objections, so ordered sir.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

On calendar page 10, Calendar 294, Senate Bill 283, I'd like to place that item on our Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

cf  
SENATE

253  
April 20, 2016

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, and that, I believe is the end of our Consent Calendar. If the clerk can now call the items on the Consent Calendar, followed by a vote on our Consent Calendar today.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk. We gotta' wait two seconds to get this on, up and running, and then we will start getting the list called for you, sir.

Mr. Clerk, please call the Consent Calendar.

THE CLERK:

On page 2, Calendar 131, Senate Bill 204. Page 3, Calendar 133, Senate Bill 207. Page 3, Calendar 145, Senate Bill 132. Page 4, 180 -- Calendar 183, Senate Bill 236. Page 5, Calendar 192, Senate Bill 230. Page 6, Calendar 232, Senate Bill 254. Page 7, Calendar 243, Senate Bill 364. Page 8, Calendar 261, Senate Bill 233. Also on page 8, Calendar 254, Senate Bill 178. Page 8, Calendar 263, Senate Bill 252. Page 9, Calendar 274, Senate Bill 244. Page 9, Calendar 283, Senate Bill 306. Page 10, Calendar 294, Senate Bill 283. Also on page 10, Calendar 297, Senate Bill 372. Page 11, Calendar 302, Senate Bill 436. Page 11, Calendar 309, Senate Bill 398. Page 12, Calendar 314, Senate Bill 103. On page 23, Calendar 420, House Bill 5350. Page 27, Calendar 70, Senate Bill 72. Page 28, Calendar 87, Senate Bill 107. Page 29, Calendar 126. Senate Bill 197. Page 30, Calendar 150, Senate Bill 161. Page 32, Calendar 199, Senate Bill 20. And page 35, Calendar 270, Senate Bill 288.

cf  
SENATE

254  
April 20, 2016

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, will you please call a roll call vote on the Consent Calendar? The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

Immediate Roll Call has been ordered in the Senate.  
Immediate Roll Call on today's Consent Calendar has been ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Fonfara.

All members have voted, all members have voted. The machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk, will you please call the tally on the Consent Calendar?

THE CLERK:

On Today's Consent Calendar.

Total number voting	35
Necessary for Adoption	18
Those voting Yea	35
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	1

THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar passes. Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, does the clerk have Senate Agenda Number 2 on his desk?

**JOINT  
STANDING  
COMMITTEE  
HEARINGS**

**PUBLIC  
SAFETY AND  
SECURITY  
PART 2  
403 – 877**

**2016**

PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

SB20 are reasonable bills. Police officers should be able to check for required permitting. Over-intoxicated individuals should not be carrying a firearm. These are simple reasonable measures to take to hopefully reduce gun violence.

Also, I oppose HB5409. Thank you again for giving me the opportunity to speak today, it's tricky bringing a three-year-old but this isn't the first time she's been here so I think she's starting to get the routine.

REP. DARGAN (115TH): Well, thank you very much, I don't know if she wants to testify (indiscernible 2:19:15), is there anything that you want to say?

CAITLIN DEMARIS: I'm sure she would given the opportunity but I'll wait till she's of voting age, I think.

REP. DARGAN (115TH): Well, thank you very much, both of you, for coming up. Questions from Committee members at all? Thank you very much for coming.

The next presenter is Representative Tami Zawistowski here? Oh, there she is.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST): The microphone's already on. Good afternoon, Senator Larson, Representative Dargan, Senator Guglielmo and Representative Zupkus who I don't see here. And members of the Public Safety and Security Committee.

SB236

My name is Tami Zawistowski, State Representative from the 61<sup>st</sup> District which is Suffield, East Granby and a portion of Windsor.

## PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

The testimony that you have in front of you incorrectly addresses the Public Health Committee, we've actually revised our testimony so the written testimony will be corrected by the time you see it tomorrow.

I'm here today to testify to something entirely different than what you have heard already this morning. I'm here to request your support for SB236, AN ACT EXTENDING THE SCHOOL SECURITY INFRASTRUTURE COMPETETIVE GRANT PROGRAM.

First, I'd like to thank you for taking up this bill; I first came up with - with this idea through one of the towns that I represent. Suffield had been working on security upgrades but fell behind because of a change in administration in the schools. There's now a new school superintendent. They have been currently - they have continued to do as much work as possible while the school is in session; they expect the main work on the vestibules to start in April but may not be finished until August.

There's really no mechanism administratively to request any kind of exemption for this or extension so this is why I'm here, to ask for a legislative solution to this.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify and I'd be very happy to answer any questions you might have.

REP. DARGAN (115TH): Thank you very much, Representative. Questions from Committee members?  
Senator Guglielmo.

SENATOR GUGLIELMO (35TH): This just expands the



85  
dm/cw

March 3, 2016  
11:00 A.M.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

amount of time, right? I mean this is really a technical change?

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST): Yes it is. Currently, I actually requested a six-month extension and your committee decided on 12 months which as far as I'm concerned is fine with me.

SENATOR GUGLIELMO (35TH): Okay, thank you.

REP. DARGAN (115TH): Thank you, further questions from Committee members? Okay, hearing none, thank you very much Representative.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST): Thank you.

REP. DARGAN (115TH): The next presenter is James Cornwell.

JAMES CORNWELL: Senator Larson, Representative Dargan, Senator Guglielmo, Representative Zupkus and members of the Committee. My name is James Cornwell, Director of Operations for Phoenix Investigations.

SB237

In the interest of time for the members of the Committee, with me today are a group who have spent a lot of energy and time - and commitment - over many months to establish the information in this testimony I'm going to provide and the booklets that you will receive.

Rather than have each of us testify individually, the testimony speaks on behalf of all of the people with me and a number of others who participated with us but couldn't be here today. This group is comprised of former law enforcement, Department of Corrections personnel totaling over 60 years of

## PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

nation. Thank you.

SENATOR LARSON (3RD): Thank you for your testimony. Any questions? Seeing none - thank you, Tom Kuroski. Tom, if you could state your name please for the record.

SB236  
TOM KUROSKI: Yes. Good morning, Senator Larson, Representative Dargan and members of the Public Safety and Security Committee.

My name is Tom Kuroski, I am presently serving in my sixth year as President of the Newtown Federation of Teachers Local 1727 and I've been a science teacher in Newtown Public Schools for the past 31 years.

I'm here today on behalf of the Newtown Public Schools the American Federation of Teachers in Connecticut and all the school districts within the state to ask that you extend the time period to award a school district security grant from June 20<sup>th</sup> - June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

I'd like to begin by saying thank you to the Governor Malloy, members of the Public Safety and Security Committee and members of the Sandy Hook Advisory Commission for helping to initiate this program in the months following what is considered by many to be the single worst tragedy to happen in this school in the history of our country.

The school security infrastructure competitive grant program has been one of the most important legislative initiatives to ever come out of Hartford in the aftermath of the Sandy Hook tragedy. After learning about how the event unfolded, leaders in schools across the state and country began asking themselves - could this happen in one of our

## PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

schools?

Do we have glass that a gunman could not shoot through to gain entrance into our schools? Do we have locks on our doors to our classrooms that would allow teachers to lock the rooms without having to go out in the hallway during a shooting event. Do we have two - two-door entry way vestibules that would keep a gunman from just having to penetrate one set of doors before gaining entry into the school?

The painful reality is that the answer to these questions and many others in most school systems in Connecticut and across the country was a frightening no. Everyone suddenly felt extremely vulnerable.

As you know, many of these safety measures were never required when schools were constructed pre 12/14/12 because at that time, no one could have ever imagined even in their worst nightmare a tragedy occurring like the one that happened in Sandy Hook only three years ago.

Unfortunately, this has become our country's new reality. All new school construction projects must include safety and security protocols in their architectural plans. Many of these protocols were mandated as a result of the work done by the Sandy Hook Advisory Commission and were developed based on what we learned from the attack on the Sandy Hook School.

As schools around the state began to investigate the cost of upgrading the safety and security infrastructure in their existing schools, they realized very quickly that the cost to make these upgrades was very high. So high, in fact, that the

## PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

superintendents and boards of education had to make difficult decisions when school budgets were developed as to how much money to spend on security initiatives and how much it would cost - how much this cost would take away from the important educational and district needs.

School leaders should never have to be forced to make a decision as to whether to spend money to make their schools safe or make their schools where the diverse educational needs of their students are being funded.

The School Security Infrastructure Competitive Grant Program takes much of this burden off the shoulders of the superintendent and boards of education. Unfortunately, not all schools have benefitted from this program and the many that have already received funding need much more to get their schools as safe as recommended by the Sandy Hook Advisory Commission.

Please let the 169 districts in Connecticut finish the important work they have started. Allow them to continue upgrading the safety and security in their schools without having to financially compromise the education of their students. You need to sustain and provide the necessary funding for this important program until all schools in the state can educate their students in a safe and secure environment.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my thoughts on this important issue.

SENATOR LARSON (3RD): Thank you for your testimony, I appreciate it. Do we have any questions? Representative Dargan followed by Representative Zupkus.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

REP. DARGAN (115TH): Tom, thank you for being here, it's good seeing you again. I know that after that horrific day that we worked and passed one of the first bills dealing with not only first responders but teachers and people that were impacted at that school that day. So I guess my question to you is how was your fellow teachers that you represent doing at this time in the Newtown School District?

TOM KUROSKI: I can tell you they're doing much better and we're working very hard. It's only been three years since the event. We're still in the midst of a very difficult recovery. Every year brings new challenges. The transitions that are occurring next year are going to be profound.

We have our preschool and kindergarten students going for the first time out of the - the relocated Sandy Hook school into the brand new school which is going to bring with it a lot of anxiety along with the teachers who are going to be driving up that same driveway on the same road for the first time since that horrific day.

We also have our - our first graders who are presently in fourth grade at - at the relocated Sandy Hook moving into a brand new school for the first time. So those first graders are entering fifth grade at the Reed Intermediate School. And of course with that are going to bring additional challenges both educationally and socially and emotionally.

I can tell you though, that the funding that we did receive as a result of this grant really helped us stabilize our infrastructure to the point where we are in a more safe and secure environment which I

## PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

think is the first step.

Safety and security is a basic human need. I think you have - it's like - it's like eating or drinking. You have to have that in place before any of these other educational initiatives can take place. You cannot - you cannot be a good teacher if you're uncomfortable in the environment with which you are teaching. And I can tell you right now that I don't know exactly how many schools in the state benefitted from this program. I know a lot did but I - I'm sure that there's a lot more work to do.

I know how much - how much the grant funding from the federal government did to help us secure our facilities but still - we have a lot of work to still do and I'm sure other school districts in the state are in the same situation, so -

REP. DARGAN (115TH): Well, thank you very much for coming and testifying today. Thank you so much.

SENATOR LARSON (3RD): Representative Zupkus.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH): I just wanted to make a comment. Thank you for coming and I am in must support of this bill to extend it. I think it is a great piece of legislation and it's been extended already so - but with the state of our state, I would say hurry up.

TOM KUROSKI: I would say hurry up, absolutely.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH): Because we don't know what's going to be left, so hurry up.

TOM KUROSKI: I understand.

25A

**Testimony of****Tom Kuroski, President****Newtown Federation of Teachers – Local 1727****S.B. 236 (Raised) An act extending the School Security Infrastructure Competitive Grant Program. (PS)**

Good Morning Senator Larson and Representative Dargan and members of the Public Safety and Security Committee. My name is Tom Kuroski, I am presently serving in my sixth year as President of the Newtown Federation of Teachers, Local 1727 and I have been a science teacher in Newtown for the past 31 years. I am here today on behalf of the Newtown Public Schools, the American Federation of Teachers, Connecticut and all the school districts in the state to ask that you extend the time period to award a school district security grant from June 30, 2016, to June 30, 2017.

I would like to begin by saying thank you to Governor Malloy, members of the Public Safety and Security Committee and members of the Sandy Hook Advisory Commission for helping to initiate this program in the months following what is considered by many, to be the single worst tragedy to happen in a school, in the history of our country.

The School Security Infrastructure Competitive Grant Program has been one of the most important legislative initiatives to ever come out of Hartford in the aftermath of the Sandy Hook Tragedy. After learning about how the event unfolded, leaders in schools across the state and country began asking themselves could this happen in one of our schools? Do we have glass that a gunman could not shoot through to gain entrance into our schools? Do we have locks on doors to our classrooms that would allow teachers to lock their rooms without having to go out in the hall during a shooting event? Do we have two door entryway vestibules that would keep a gunman from just having to penetrate one set of doors before gaining entry to the school? The painful reality is, that the answer to these questions in most school systems in Connecticut and across the country was a frightening NO! Everyone suddenly felt extremely vulnerable!

As you know, many of these safety measures were never required when schools were constructed pre - 12/14/12, because at that time no one could have ever imagined, even in their worst nightmare, a tragedy occurring like the one that happened in Sandy Hook only three years ago. Unfortunately this has become our countries new reality. All new school construction projects must include safety and security protocols in the

architectural plans. Many of these protocols were mandated as a result of the work done by the Sandy Hook Advisory commission and were developed based on what was learned from the attack on the Sandy Hook School.

As schools around the state began to investigate the cost of upgrading the safety and security infrastructure in their existing schools they realized very quickly that the cost to make these upgrades was very high. So high in fact, that Superintendents and Boards of Education had to make difficult decisions when school budgets were developed as to how much money to spend on security initiatives and how much this cost would take away from other important educational and district needs.

School leaders should never have to be forced to make a decision as whether to spend money to make their schools safe or make their schools where all the diverse educational needs of their students are being funded. The School Security Infrastructure Competitive Grant Program takes much of this burden off the shoulders of the Superintendent and Board of Education. Unfortunately not all schools have benefited from this program and the many that have already received funding need much more to get there schools as safe as recommended by the Sandy Hook Advisory Commission.

Please let the 169 districts in Connecticut finish the important work they have started. Allow them to continue upgrading the safety and security of their schools without having to financially compromise the education of their students. You need to sustain and provide the necessary funding for this important program until all schools in the state can educate their students in a safe and secure environment.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my thoughts on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Thomas Kuroski  
Teacher – Newtown Public Schools (31 years)  
President – Newtown Federation of Teachers – Local 1727  
Co-Chair – Newtown District Safety and Security Committee  
AFT-CT Executive Committee Vices President





State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STATE CAPITOL

7B

REPRESENTATIVE TAMI ZAWISTOWSKI  
SIXTY-FIRST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 4200  
300 CAPITOL AVENUE  
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591

CAPITOL: (800) 842-1423  
Tami.Zawistowski@housegop.ct.gov

MEMBER  
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Thursday March 3, 2016  
Public Safety & Security Committee  
Public Hearing Testimony

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 236

Good Morning Co-Chairs Senator Larson, Representative Dargan; Ranking Members Senator Guglielmo, Representative Zupkus; and esteemed members of the Committee.

My name is Tami Zawistowski and I represent the 61st District which includes Suffield, East Granby, and Windsor. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you and speak on S.B. 236.

**SB 236 – An Act Extending the School Security Infrastructure Competitive Grant Program.**

I am requesting your support for S.B. 236, which will extend the time period to award a school security grant from June 30, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

Public safety is one of our most important priorities that we have as state legislators, and the safety of our schools is right at the top of that list.

The competitive grant program established in 2013 set standards for school safety and provided funds for school systems that complied with its requirements. While many of our school systems have participated in this program, some need additional time to complete this work past the June 30, 2016 deadline since it is difficult to perform necessary work while school is in session.

I ask that you consider this request favorably and provide the extra time some of our schools may need to complete this important work.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Sincerely,

Representative Tami Zawistowski  
61st District – Suffield, East Granby, Windsor