



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)

Protecting our Future: Addressing School Security Challenges in America

Emergency Preparedness, Response & Communications Subcommittee

July 9 2018

School violence continues to take the lives of so many young people, leaving behind devastated families and communities. Unfortunately, Congress has refused to address this issue head-on, despite the devastating increase in school shootings over the last 20 years, including at least one shooting about every week of the 2018 school year.

In the aftermath of the massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglass High School in Parkland, Florida, where 17 people were killed, President Trump made several proposals geared towards improving school preparedness. One of those proposals called for the establishment of a Federal Commission on School Safety, a group comprised of Cabinet Secretaries tasked with developing school safety strategies.

Predictably, the Trump Administration's school safety commission has stated that it will not study how access to guns affects school violence, which is completely senseless. Why are we wasting time discussing school violence when the Federal Commission on School Safety will not engage on the common factor in every catastrophic school shooting? The Commission's willful ignorance has caused students and parents alike to criticize the Commission's efforts. I hope that the Administration will wake up and reconsider its stance on research guns and school violence.

In the meantime, Congress needs to do its part to protect children in schools, which includes making sure there are adequate resources for communities to combat school violence and enacting common sense gun safety legislation. I hope today's hearing will serve a launching point for meaningful action in school safety and security by the Committee on Homeland Security.

#

Media contact: Adam Comis at (202) 225-9978