

**From:** Rep. Larry Pittman  
**Sent:** Monday, April 16, 2018 10:40 PM  
**To:** @House/Members <Housemembers@ncleg.net>; @Senate/Members <Senatemembers@ncleg.net>  
**Cc:** Tammy Pittman (Rep. Larry Pittman) <Pittmanla@ncleg.net>  
**Subject:** Saving Innocent Lives

Dear Members of the House Select Committee on School Safety and other Members of the NCGA,

Among all the ideas being considered in the effort to put a stop to shooting incidents in schools and save innocent lives, I urge you not to overlook or dismiss out of hand what is the most practical, common sense, and constitutionally sound proposal of all.

Gun free zones represent tragedies waiting to happen, as they offer would be attackers an open invitation to kill without fear of facing return fire. If that brave principal at Sandy Hook Elementary or that courageous and heroic coach in Parkland, Fla. had been armed, they might have been able to save their own lives and many others.

Allowing teachers and other school personnel to receive proper tactical training and be armed, if they are willing to volunteer to do so, would provide such a powerful deterrent to those who wish to do harm that there would be a dramatic reduction, if not elimination, of such incidents. Polls show that between 20% and 30% of our teachers in North Carolina are willing to take on this responsibility. There is a retired teacher who does substitute teaching in Henderson County, who has contacted me about a sizeable group of teachers in that county who, along with her, are eager to take on the challenge and responsibility of defending innocent lives in our schools. Even if it is only 20%, that would be a very significant number, and would pose a real deterrent to potential shooters who would know they might face resistance. In what few incidents might still occur, there would be an opportunity that does not now exist in our schools to save lives that would otherwise be lost before law enforcement can arrive.

This is already working very well in at least 18 other States, and I recently heard Dr. John Lott, an expert on the subject, on the radio saying it is in 25 States. It can work here, also, and North Carolina, otherwise a leader among the States, should not be so far behind on this.

What we must not do is to allow ourselves to be misguided by emotionalism to enact further gun control laws that violate the Second Amendment and the rights of honest citizens. Such new gun control laws will not solve the problem. They will only leave good people defenseless, when the best way to stop an evil person with a gun is a good person with a gun. We will help nothing by violating the rights of 18-20 year old citizens or discriminating against a certain set of long guns simply on the basis of their cosmetic appearance.

We on the Joint Legislative Emergency Management Oversight Committee have already heard from police officers who provide tactical training for police officers and also for civilians, who are willing to provide tactical training for teachers, other school personnel and other citizens, such as veterans and retired law enforcement officers, who are willing to take on this responsibility. We were told that there would potentially be a network of such trainers across the State. I know of no one who is advocating having people who are not sworn law enforcement officers do this without such tactical training. It would be quite an undertaking, of course, but it could be done. It would certainly be better to allow this to happen in our State than to have what happened in Parkland, with officers on the scene staying away from the shooter while those inside the building had no real way to defend themselves and each other.

We need to allow teachers, other school personnel and other citizens, who are willing, to be screened and to receive tactical training and bring their weapons to school, in cooperation with local law enforcement who would

need to be informed as to who is doing this. We should give them a fighting chance. Otherwise, when they die, and children die whom they could have defended, their blood will be on our hands. I cannot accept that. I hope you will think this through and find that you cannot accept it, either.

Rep. Larry G. Pittman