



PLAINVIEW-OLD BETHPAGE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

106 Washington Avenue, Plainview, New York 11803

www.pobschools.org

March 22, 2023

Congressman George Santos
1117 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Santos,

We, the members of the Plainview-Old Bethpage Board of Education, along with the leaders of the Plainview Congress of Teachers, Association of Administrators, Parent/Teacher Association, Teamsters, Superintendent of Schools, and our POBJFKHS Student Government, write to you deeply concerned about your recently filed legislation, H.R. 1095, that seeks to "declare an AR-15 style rifle ... to be the National Gun of the United States." Paramount among our goals as school board members is to ensure the safety of our children and staff. Your proposed legislation to make the AR-15 the National Gun promotes the very weapon which has been often used to cause death and destruction in our nation's schools.

Since the Columbine High School shooting in 1999, over 300,000 students have been touched by gun violence in more than 350 separate school shootings. Indeed, last year alone there were over 50 school shootings, more than any year since Columbine. The mass shootings at the following schools all involved an AR-15-style weapon: Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas on May 24, 2022 (21 dead); Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida on February 14, 2018 (17 dead); and Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut on December 14, 2012 (27 dead).

Co-sponsoring a bill that glorifies this semiautomatic assault rifle will only serve to glorify what has become a weapon of choice for mass shootings in schools, what should be a sacred place where students and educators feel safe. Instead, we ask you to devote your time and attention to advocating for gun safety, supporting legislation that could help stop the massacre of our children and staff.

We cannot emphasize enough how disturbed and disappointed that this proposed legislation is one of your first acts as our congressional representative. We request that you withdraw as co-sponsor and pledge to vote against such legislation. It is never too late to do the right thing! Let us join together to protect all of our communities and to keep our schools safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Debbie Bernstein".

Debbie Bernstein
President, Board of Education



Seth Greenberg
Vice President, Board of Education



Gary Bettan
Trustee, Board of Education



Jared Goerke
Trustee, Board of Education



Ginger Lieberman
Trustee, Board of Education



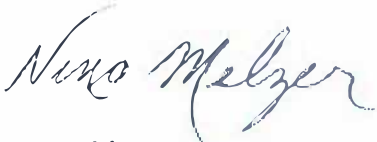
Tara Rock
Trustee, Board of Education



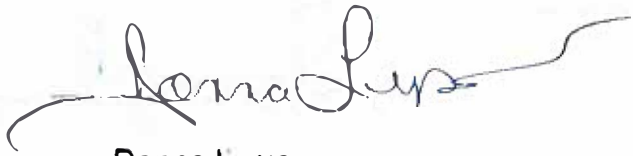
Lauren Sackstein
Trustee, Board of Education



Dr. Mary O'Meara
Superintendent of Schools



Nina Melzer
President, Plainview Congress of Teachers



Donna Lupia
President, PTA



Maria Carnesi
Co-President, POB Association of Administrators



Laurie Lynn
Co-President, POB Association of Administrators



Ben Carezza
Director, Local 237 Teamsters



Cheryl Dender
Coordinator of Community Services
Senior Citizens Club

Plainview-Old Bethpage Central School District

106 Washington Avenue
Plainview, New York 11803
www.pobschools.org



Board of Education

Debbie Bernstein, President
Seth Greenberg, Vice President
Gary Bettan
Jared Goerke
Ginger Lieberman
Tara Rock
Lauren Sackstein

August 31, 2022

Resolved, that the New York State School Boards Association support legislation at the state and/or federal level that would reform the current gun laws to strengthen background checks, implementing red flag laws, as well as laws that will restrict guns from those under the age of twenty-one.

Rationale

Since the horrific events at Columbine High School in 1999, school shootings have become an unfortunate recurring event in the United States. Enough is enough. It is time for lawmakers to take a stand against this type of senseless violence and carnage that students potentially face just to get an education.

Strengthening background checks will prevent criminals and those that should not have their hands on a gun from obtaining one. New York State has already implemented red flag laws, which allow a gun to be removed from an individual that is showing signs they may harm themselves or others. It is of vital importance to the students and school personnel of New York that these laws be implemented nationwide. As strong as the laws in New York State are, red flag laws must be implemented nationally to prevent someone from simply crossing state lines to obtain a gun.

In many of these school shootings, the shooter has been either a current, or recently graduated student. That is reason enough that school aged kids should be unable to purchase a gun that can then immediately be used to murder their classmates.

In the past year gun violence has been a reality throughout New York State. Therefore, it is imperative that our state legislature pass gun safety laws as soon as possible. Every day is an

unknown gun event waiting to happen. There is a definite urgency that NYSSBA take immediate action to protect the lives of our students and school personnel.