

Senate State Affairs Committee

Wednesday, March 13, 2024 - 8:00 A.M.

TESTIMONY ON: All Subjects

Written Testimony

Name (First & Last)	Subject	Manner Testifying	Representing Company/Organization	City	For / Against	Wish to Testify	District #
Shannon Oxford	S 1418	IP	Self	Boise	Against	Y	19

State Affairs Committee:

My name is Shannon Oxford, and I am the mother to two young boys here in Boise. My husband is serving our community as a cardiologist, and we love raising our family in Boise. However, we will not feel safe to raise our children here if there are guns in our classrooms. The data shows that having guns in schools increases access to guns for students and that someone will be shot outside of an active shooter incident.

I appreciate the improvements that Bill 1418 offers versus HB 415, including required gun safety trainings and the ability for school districts to implement their own policies; however, it does not go far enough. I urge to include two key changes: (1) We need to give school districts the ability to opt-out of allowing guns in their districts - they understand the families and dynamics in their communities and schools - and (2) parents need to be notified if their child’s teacher is approved to carry guns in their classroom so they can make educated decisions about what is best for their family.

You have the power to protect our children through these revisions to Bill 1418. Please let school districts and parents decide what is right for their communities and families.

Thank you,
Shannon Oxford

Brayden Miller	S 1418	IP	Self	Nampa	For	Y	12
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My name is Brayden Miller, I'm 23 and I graduated from Nampa High School in 2019.

Name (First & Last)	Subject	Manner Testifying	Representing Company/Organization	City	For / Against	Wish to Testify	District #
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Brayden Miller	cont.						12
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After Joe Biden introduced the Gun Free School Zones Act of 1993, and the law was signed by Bush Sr., the frequency and severity of school shootings has tripled.

The federal act (after being amended in 1995) was in full effect when the Columbine tragedy took place. It did nothing to stop that event from taking place, and I can not fathom the logic that somehow disarming those who look after our children will make them safer. People say this is what school resource officers are for, yet after numerous Supreme Court rulings and after seeing what happened at Uvalde, we know that we can not trust Law Enforcement to protect our children, nor do they have any legal obligation or duty to do so.

I know that during my years in middle school and high school, after Sandy Hook, Parkland, and so many others, I was consistently on edge that my school was next. Every class period I would scan the room for possible weapons to fight back against an attacker, such as scissors, my pencil, my car keys, etc. Obviously none of those would do any good against a firearm and I know that whatever laws were on the books were going to do nothing to persuade the conscious of a potential mass murderer.

Little did I know that though Idaho had and does have some of the least restrictive gun laws in the nation, we had (at that time) not had a single mass shooting. When this government body lowered the concealed carry age to 18 years old in 2019, I felt at ease and safe knowing I had the tools and the means to protect myself and others. I would like you to ask yourselves: How have shootings risen, when federal gun laws have only gotten stricter?

Please do everything in your power to get SB 1418 on the Governor's desk and signed into law. Thank you.

Dianna David	S 1418	IP	Self	Boise	For	Y	15
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Written will be ready by tomorrow morning.

Quinn Perry	S 1418	IP	Idaho School Boards Association	Boise	For	Y	19
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Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and committee for the record my name is Quinn Perry and I'm the Deputy Director for the Idaho School Boards Association.

ISBA's position is "neutral" on SB 1418, as we have members who may fall on both sides of this issue. Our organization has always had a position that the school board is in the best position to determine school safety decisions – including arming staff or not.

That said, we'd like to speak to the changes made in this bill that differ from another bill from the body across the rotunda.

Name (First & Last)	Subject	Manner Testifying	Representing Company/Organization	City	For / Against	Wish to Testify	District #
Quinn Perry	<i>cont.</i>						19

While this bill will force schools to adopt a policy on authorizing staff, we are appreciative that it creates a “floor” and not a “ceiling” for how school boards can work with their staff, parents, and community members for how that process will work in their neighborhood schools.

In the 15 or so districts and charters that have policies, they all require some level of training well beyond the basic Enhance Carry Permit. That is first, and foremost, because our students deserve that. But it’s also to mitigate risk, and to truly prepare these individuals for what may happen when they’re faced with an unthinkable situation.

I’ve said this before, but in districts where they require active shooter training, they’ve often found their staff decide ultimately, it’s not something that will work for them.

I know in this building; we often find ourselves trying to tackle these tough and emotional policy decisions.

Personally, I think it’s very important that this committee knows that Chairman Guthrie, Vice Chair Bernt, the education groups, and law enforcement partners put a TON of time and attention into coming up with a consensus piece of legislation. My predecessor told me that this work was the “Art of negotiation” and while it will not make everyone happy, this is a workable piece of public policy that we can implement at the district and charter level.

Stu Hobson	S 1418	IP	Idaho Association of School Resource Officers	Meridian	For	Y	21
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Good Afternoon,

S 1418 is a vast improvement on HB415 which nearly everyone, including many who voted Yes on the House side agreed was a badly written bill. As a retired Police Officer and School Resource Officer of 22 years I stand for S 1418. The Idaho Association of School Resource Officers (IDASRO) believes that the decision to allow staff to be armed should stay within the control of the local school districts. If a school district decides to allow staff to be armed there must be a policy and guidelines that ensures that student and staff safety is the first priority. For safety to be of the highest priority armed staff members should be made to meet established initial training qualifications that are ongoing on an annual basis. Using Law Enforcement resources to develop and maintain the training standards is important. S 1418 will require school districts to have a policy but allows the district to decide what the policy says. I feel S 1418 finds a livable compromise between what is currently law and HB415. I support the passage of S 1418.

Name (First & Last)	Subject	Manner Testifying	Representing Company/Organization	City	For / Against	Wish to Testify	District #
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Michael Strollo	S 1418	W	Self	Boise	Against	N	18
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This is a terrible bill! Right now individual school districts can decide whether to have armed security in their schools! More individuals with guns in a school is only creating a dangerous situation! Even training for school resource officers is not enough in a school with a possible armed person!!In the Florida High School shooting a few years ago the armed school resource officer was not prepared! Of course Uvalde , more and more guns are not the answer! Real stringent training is necessary for any responders! Including police, not teachers or any school employees. More guns anywhere increases the likelihood of injuries and death!!thank you. I am a retired teacher

Sarah Hansen	S 1418	W	Self	Rexburg	For	N	34
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Hello, my name is Sarah Hansen, I reside in Rexburg and am active in our school district as a volunteer and parent.

I find myself in a unique position with this bill; while I DO NOT support or want guns in schools, I can see this bill does provide some additional safeguards and requirements, and is an improvement from the previous bill H415.

I see there has been compromise and attempts to keep schools safer. While I don't support or agree fully, I find myself feeling neutral toward it because of the improvements.

Thank you for your time and efforts.

Morgan Ballis	S 1418	IP	Idaho Association of School Resource Officers	Hailey	For	Y	26
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My name is Morgan Ballis and I am the President of the Idaho Association of School Resource Officers (IDASRO). On behalf of the 200 School Resource Officers IDASRO represents, we support S1418. S1418 fills the gaps of HB415. This legislation strikes a critical balance between creating a pathway for educators to be armed on campus while maintaining local control for school boards to collaborate with law enforcement to create training requirements that meet their communities' needs. IDASRO asks that you vote yes on S1418.

Roberta Olson	S 1418	V	Self	Boise	For	Y	19
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Thank you to the committee and chair for this time.

My name is Roberta Olson. My husband and I have lived in Idaho for the past 18 years.

We have watched the political climate in Idaho change.

Name (First & Last)	Subject	Manner Testifying	Representing Company/Organization	City	For / Against	Wish to Testify	District #
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Roberta Olson	cont.						19
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Respected politicians, in the past, were able to listen to all sides and create a compromise based on what the citizens of Idaho could support.

I want to thank Senator Guthrie for consulting with the Idaho Sheriff's Association, State Police association, School Board Association, teachers, School Resource Association, and private security groups for their input into Senate bill 1418.

Senator Guthrie has listened to and taken into account the need for local control of our schools. The school boards, teachers, resource officers, sheriffs and police officers know their community and schools. This bill includes both local law enforcement and school boards in making policies for concealed weapons on school grounds.

Thank you Senator Guthrie for listening to and respecting local control of our schools.

This bill is a compromise. I had or hope all school boards would have the right to opt out of the requirement to create a policy for allowing school employees to have a concealed weapon on school grounds. This is not what is in the bill. I understand this bill does not give me everything I wanted. But, it is a bill that respects local control of our schools.

I support the passage of Senate bill 1418.

Thank you.

Kylie Castellaw	S 1418	IP	Self	EAGLE	For	Y	14
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I am leaning positive on this bill, and appreciate all the careful thought, consideration, and safety checks that have been put into it.

I LIKE that it allows districts to set their own policies and determine the appropriate level of training and requirements.

I DISLIKE that it forces districts to come up with a policy (spending precious time and resources on that even for districts that want no firearms on campus), among other things.

Thank you very much for allowing me to share my thoughts today.

Name (First & Last)	Subject	Manner Testifying	Representing Company/Organization	City	For / Against	Wish to Testify	District #
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Kylie Castellaw	<i>cont.</i>						14
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Kylie Castellaw
 Mother, Wife, Employee, as well as a Child of public school educators

Judith Roesbery	S 1418	W	Self	Garden City	For	N	16
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I do not like any bill that puts people with guns into more public places, but that's mostly because I am afraid the people with the guns might not use them responsibly. I particularly do not like the idea of guns in school buildings or around children in general. However, I would support S1418 because it provides, among other things, for

- (1) Serious training and screening for the people who would be allowed to bring their guns into schools.
- (2) It limits the number of people who are allowed to carry weapons into a school, and provides for a way to specify which weapons are carried.
- (3) It puts the responsibility on each school district to design a plan that is appropriate for their local area, so it checks the "local control" box.
- (4) It will not destroy the programs already in use by 12 rural school districts in Idaho, which would be the case with the previous bill, H415.

Some parts of this bill still cause me heartburn, such as the inability for a school district to "opt out" of the program. This would cost precious time and resources for any school district which did not want to participate at all, forcing them to create a program that they do not want.

Another problematic piece is insurance. One Representative from a very rural district voted against H415 because the insurance carrier for his school district told him it would immediately cancel its insurance if H415 became law. I don't see anything in S1418 that addresses who would pay the increased insurance premium costs. As my neighbor told me, she doesn't want her tax dollars going to insurance companies so that school personnel can be armed - she wants her tax dollars to go directly to education.

I also do not like the provision that the name of the person(s) authorized to carry a firearm would be kept confidential. Why is this? Would everyone not want to know who the go-to person is in the type of emergency would be? Wouldn't the "designated good-guy" want everyone to know they ARE the good guy, when they produce their weapon, not the bad guy?

I hope you all see that this is not a "Gun Bill;" it's a "School Safety Bill." H415 was a "Gun Bill," written by the NRA. S1418 is a

Name (First & Last)	Subject	Manner Testifying	Representing Company/Organization	City	For / Against	Wish to Testify	District #
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Judith Roesbery	cont.						16
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"School Safety Bill," which I believe has the support of most, if not all of the stakeholders.

For these reasons, I hope you will pass S1418; if only to put this matter of guns in schools to rest for the time being. Lord knows we have more pressing issues here in Idaho.

nathan guy	S 1418	IP	Representing my self as a father of kids in school, as well as my customers and other gun shops that could not make it today.	nampa	Against	Y	23
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Lindy Hoyt	S 1418	W	Self, Native Idahoan Mother	Garden City	For	N	16
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Thank you for the opportunity to send in my testimony. Senator Guthrie, Members of the Committee, my name is Lindy, I currently live in Ada County. I was born and raised in Bonneville County and also lived in Latah County for college. I come from a family of gun owners and I was taught gun safety and also how to shoot. I know when there is a time and place for guns, and schools are not that place! Studies have shown that more guns do not make us safer, it actually does the opposite! I appreciate what Senator Guthrie has done with this bill by taking into consideration the facts and studies of gun violence while working with law enforcement to bring forward a bill that isn't completely reckless. Our children are at stake here after all! I want to make it clear that I do not agree with guns in schools, but S1418 is better than the alternative. It's really sad we are having to fight to keep our children safe from state gun mandates! Senator Guthrie, I appreciate you!

Marji Bass	S 1418	IP	self	Garden City	For	Y	16
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My name is Marji Bass and I can't believe I am speaking in favor of S 1418. Since we have faced an onslaught of bills to get more guns in schools for the last several sessions I have written and testified vigorously against them. As a retired teacher and school counselor with young granddaughters just starting grade school. I am truly scared at the prospect of armed faculty in our schools. Now it appears these bills arming schools will keep being forced down our throats. So, with that in our future I grudgingly support S1418.

There are some of the elements in this bill which allow me to accept it which have been missing from other bills.

Name (First & Last)	Subject	Manner Testifying	Representing Company/Organization	City	For / Against	Wish to Testify	District #
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Marji Bass	<i>cont.</i>						16
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- It is important that school boards have the authority to determine if an employee should be authorized to carry a weapon and that this decision is made in conjunction with local law enforcement.
- Only employees of the district can qualify to carry rather than volunteers or contractors.
- The amount of training is much more extensive and it will be on-going with local law enforcement.
- The person authorized to carry is "tied" to a particular school property and cannot carry at other schools.
- Allowing school districts until 2026 to get their programs in place.

There are other points in this bill that help to assuage my fears. So after talking myself through this I do ask you to vote yes on S1418.

Kacey Nelson	S 1418	W	Self	Boise	For	N	15
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As a mother of two young children in the Idaho public school system, I firmly believe that the amendments made to S1418 are the correct action on this bill. An untrained person with a gun is a liability to everyone around them. Allowing loosely written words to form laws will place our children in more danger than they already face with school shootings as a real risk in their lifetimes. The school boards should have the right to decide what goes on in their schools and the right to approve or deny privileges.

Jonathan Chu	S 1418	W	Self	Boise	For	N	16
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I raise in support of S1418,

Several weeks ago, I testified against House Bill H415 given that it is a recipe for chaos in a true "active shooter" situation. It essentially allowed the unfettered weaponization of schools by individuals with inadequate training or background, access into schools with no notification. It lacked any input by school districts, school boards, school administrators or law enforcement. It would also supersede current Idaho Code which already allows individual school districts to design standards which fit their unique situation and needs. Exercising local control, twelve Idaho School districts have in fact already created such programs. These programs include specific training requirements and notification of local authorities of who might actually be the "good guy" on school grounds

Senate Bill S1418 goes a long way in correcting the inadequacies of H415. It has its own flaws, such as mandating all school districts to develop plans rather than having an opt in or even an opt out provision, or how these programs will be financed. However, it does

Name (First & Last)	Subject	Manner Testifying	Representing Company/Organization	City	For / Against	Wish to Testify	District #
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Jonathan Chu	<i>cont.</i>						16
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require certain minimum standards including active shooter training (an active shooter situation is a uniquely challenging environment) and allowing individual school districts to tailor the programs to their specific needs. Local control is paramount given the range of circumstances that exist across our State.

Given the fact that 12 school districts already have the right to create defense plans including who can carry a firearm on school grounds along with what training and background checks would be required, S1418 provides a framework for the rest to create their own.

ANN GIANTVALLEY	S 1418	W	the children	SANDPOINT	Against	N	1
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I am against this bill. I believe you are putting undue stress on schools and their employees in allowing concealed carry. It doesn't take long to figure who is carrying, as I am sure most of you know. Imagine if a group of kids jumped someone who was carrying... actually UNIMAGINABLE! Mostly, why would we burden our school employees with more on their already full plates. They are doing an amazing job in teaching/caring for our children in Idaho. We do not need to add another layer of skills, concerns, training...Please take care of our staffs and their precious charges: our children. Do NOT ALLOW CONCEALED CARRY on school grounds. Take the right action. Keep guns off school grounds.

With respect for our school employees and our children,
Ann Giantvalley
Sandpoint

Marilyn Beckett	S 1418	W	Self	Moscow	Against	N	6
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Schools should be gun free zones, so I am against this bill. The Idaho Freedom Foundation is against this bill, too, but for very different reasons (mainly they want virtually no restrictions on open carry, sighting constitutionality while ignoring children/staff well-being). There is NO EVIDENCE that allowing an adult(s) with a gun on school property is a deterrent to gun violence or has the potential of saving lives. Common sense would indicate a greater possibility for guns being used under this bill.

Given the reality that gun violence is the #1 cause of death in the US for children 1-19, numerous groups including national nurses associations are advocating for improved gun safety measures. Second amendment rights should never override community health and safety. Insuring the latter can be accomplished through other alternatives than firearms on premises. There are too many "what ifs" associated with a school firearm allowance. Please vote NAY.

Name (First & Last)	Subject	Manner Testifying	Representing Company/Organization	City	For / Against	Wish to Testify	District #
Vickie Fadness	S 1418	W	self	Lewiston	Against	N	7

I am so disappointed this bill was made public 24 hours before it was to be heard. The public deserves to be respected and allowed time to consider legislature.

If private schools' benefit from tax-credits, vouchers, grants, or any other state funds, those private schools should be held to the same firearm laws governing public schools.

Much is left to the school agencies/boards regarding qualifications necessary to be considered for a concealed weapon position. The knowledge and expertise necessary to be able to react instantaneously needs to be deeper. I urge you to talk with men/women who are experts in the field so that the best candidate is chosen and he/she is expected to receive professional training.

Providing blanket immunity to a shooter who accidentally killed or injured an innocent bystander does not set well. If the armed adult does not have the skills to protect everyone or the employer did not thoroughly complete a background check, legal action to both the shooter and the property owner should not be limited. This is serious stuff – work place shootings are not unusual.

Schools can display "Gun Free Zone" only if another sign says "we allow exceptions." This does not make sense.

Under records exempt, it states personnel records and names of applicants "shall not be disclosed to the public without the employee's or applicant's written consent." Then it says the names of applicants can be disclosed. This section ends with a public official able to copy "his" personnel file. Who is "he"? What happens if he is a she?

Finally, on the last page, what does this mean or do? (35) Records relating to a school employee or member of a governing board who possesses an enhanced license to carry concealed weapons and is authorized to carry a concealed firearm or other deadly or dangerous weapon on school property pursuant to section 18-3302D, Idaho Code. ??? missing something ???

It's with much regret that Idaho forces "relocation" of library material which has never killed or maimed anyone because some gun touting citizen feels uncomfortable with the book.

Vickie Fadness
District 7

Katie Knobbs	S 1418	W	Self	Sandpoint	Against	N	1
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I think this bill is significantly better than H415 to codify school staff carrying firearms, however, I feel this is a rushed response to address a problem that may not exist. Are there school districts who are seeking a change to the current law to address school staff's ability to carry firearms? Would this help them in situations where law-enforcement is less accessible or does this put all districts at risk in forcing them to develop a policy without guidance and best practices? Additionally, has law-enforcement been consulted to understand

Name (First & Last)	Subject	Manner Testifying	Representing Company/Organization	City	For / Against	Wish to Testify	District #
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Katie Knobbs	cont.						1
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the training that school staff will need to maintain to be adequately trained to respond to an active shooter or a threat by somebody trying to take their weapon?

I have significant concerns about teachers carrying firearms in a classroom where they could be overpowered and be a source of a firearm for a troubled teen. Additionally, in the event of an active shooter situation it makes it increasingly more difficult for law-enforcement when there are untrained civilians carrying and firing guns. Increasing the safety of the school staff and students is critical, there are other ways to accomplish this that does not involve arming the school staff.

Nancy Britton	S 1418	W	self	Ponderay	For	N	1
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Dear Senators,

Compared to H 415, I prefer this bill as it leaves the policies around school employees carrying concealed guns at the local level, and outlines some policy directions developed in conjunction with other stakeholders.

Thank you for your time,
Nancy Britton

Susan Scully	S 1418	W	Self	Lewiston	Against	N	7
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Hello, I am against this bill for many reasons because I am a retired alternate school principal and I spent a total of 40 years in public education including as a teacher, vice principal and I've been involved in many areas. I have been involved in school situations with people with guns at school and this bill will only make things worse. This bill is not well thought out, it is unclear and dangerous. Even the title is misleading and looks like anyone and everyone can have "Guns on School Property".

Vote No please.