



Ohio House Bill 178 - School Safety Drills

PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION

(May 28, 2013 – Medina, Ohio)

State Rep. Debbie Phillips announced the introduction of a new School Safety Drills bill to the Ohio House of Representatives during a press conference this week.

“As our nation continues to heal from the latest horrific gun violence that claimed the lives of children and teachers. This bill would increase the number of required safety drills in schools. As we have witnessed in Newtown, Connecticut, it is critical that staff and students are prepared in the face of a threatening situation.”

Currently, Ohio Revised Code 3737.73 requires schools perform nine fire drills and one school safety drill annually. The school safety drill is also required to be a ‘Lockdown Only’ drill.

The proposal Phillips drafted requests a revision of the section that requires five fire drills and four safety drills annually. Additionally, the new bill eliminates the ‘Lockdown Only’ requirement of the safety drills, which law enforcement says is beneficial because it allows more flexibility.

Phillips said the discussion for the bill surfaced between members of Athens City Council and APD after the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Newtown, Conn., in December.

Athens PD Officer Ron Books, who teaches the ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate) training program said, “This bill will help us train better. It expands the tools in the toolbox. That’s the way we like to look at it.” Brooks also referenced the 1999 Columbine High School as a tragedy to learn from. “The way we responded to those types of incidents just was not adequate,” he said. “Up until the last few years, the conventional wisdom was ‘hide where you’re at,’” he said. “We want people to know what else to do.”

Rep. Phillips said she doesn’t anticipate very much opposition from the House for the school safety drill bill, which she expects to pass in the coming weeks.

The ALICE Training Institute is changing how schools, universities and businesses respond to armed intruders. ALICE (Alert, Lock-down, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate), developed after Columbine, teaches strategies to survive a life-threatening event. Supported by educators and law enforcement organizations, ALICE is quickly becoming the new standard of care across the nation.

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