

Educators, Legislators, St. Louis Mayor's Statements on Gun Violence in Schools

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SPRINGFIELD – These are statements from a variety of individuals from education representatives, to politicians about the Uvalde, Texas, school shooting where a reported at least 21 are dead.

The following is attributable to Illinois Education Association (IEA) President Kathi Griffin, IEA Vice President Al Llorens, and IEA Secretary/Treasurer Tom Tully regarding the shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas:

“We face another tragedy – an almost unbearable and oft-repeated incident of kids getting on a bus, going to school, and hanging up their backpacks on a hook in a classroom to never walk out.

“The anguish of the families of these innocent children who were murdered, the two brave and nurturing teachers who tried to protect them, and of the Uvalde, Tex. community as a whole is almost too hard to watch.

“It should raise red flags for us as a country that in the cases of Robb Elementary School, of the Tops grocery store in Buffalo, N.Y., Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla. and Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, Conn., among others, the shooters were so young.

“The web of mental health services that are meant to catch these kids, cradle them and help heal them has giant tears in it. The signs they give get ignored instead of treated. We have to do better, especially in the shadow of a pandemic that caused more-than-normal stress and isolation.

“It’s time to stop watching these tragedies and start doing something. We ask for our leaders to come together. This is not a partisan issue. This is not a gun rights issue. This is an issue of children being able to attend school and be safe, of families of color being able to go to the grocery store in the middle of the day and not be targeted by violence, and of helping all of America not live in fear.

“We join U.S. Sen. Chris Murphy of Connecticut’s plea for Congress to come together. ‘This isn’t inevitable. These kids weren’t unlucky. This only happens in this country. Nowhere else,’ he said on the Senate floor Tuesday. ‘It is a choice.

“We join that plea. We ask that those who can make change do. Please pass common sense laws to help stop weapons from getting into the hands of those too sick to handle them. Please restore the mental health services that once existed in our schools and strengthen those outside them. Please make the right choice.”

Illinois Federation of Teachers Statement on Uvalde Tragedy

WESTMONT – Illinois Federation of Teachers President Dan Montgomery issued the following statement following reports of multiple deaths after a shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas:

“Just last week, we grieved the tragic loss of life in Buffalo. Today, we mourn yet another senseless school shooting and the deaths of students and educators. There are no words to help the families through this tragedy. The unimaginable continues to happen in our schools where teachers, students, and parents should feel safe.

“We feel, too, for the educators and school staff who must cope with their own shock, grief, and fear to help their students, parents, and community heal. We understand how overwhelming that task must be and wish you strength and courage at this difficult time.

“These tragedies have become all too familiar, but we must not become numb to them. Brutality and senseless death should never feel 'normal.'

“It is long past time for us all to come together – in our schools, our workplaces, and our communities – to end this deadly epidemic that is killing our children and devastating our communities. To do anything less is simply unthinkable.”

The Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) represents 103,000 teachers and paraprofessionals in PreK-12 school districts throughout Illinois, faculty and staff at Illinois’ community colleges and universities, public employees under every statewide elected constitutional officer, and retirees.

The following resources are available for parents and educators:

Illinois’ Threat Assessment Law

NEA School Crisis Guide

Tips for talking to students about mass shooting events

Safe Schools for All

Statement on the Uvalde, TX, shootings on behalf of Mayor Tishaura O. Jones:

"Parents shouldn't have to worry about gun violence in our schools where we send our kids. But another horrific, senseless shooting has claimed 15 innocent lives and reminded us how our babies aren't safe even in the classroom.

"The guns flooding our streets - from Buffalo to St. Louis to Uvalde - are taking their dreadful toll on communities across the country. We're long overdue for federal action to #EndGunViolence in our communities."

Sen. Durbin Statement On Shooting At Robb Elementary School In Unvalde, Texas

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, today released the following statement regarding reports that 14

students and one teacher were killed in a mass shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas:

“Today’s news is heartbreaking and tragic. Fourteen young lives and a teacher gone far too soon. My heart is with the families and friends of these lives lost.

“I implore – beg – my Republican colleagues to join Democrats in finally making changes to our gun laws to help prevent Americans from re-living this gun tragedy far too often. We cannot continue to sit on our hands and allow innocent lives to be lost. Congress must act.”

Duckworth After Uvalde School Shooting: Senate Must Suspend Filibuster to Pass Commonsense Gun Safety Reforms, Save Children’s Lives

WASHINGTON, D.C.— U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) issued the following statement in the wake of today’s horrific school shooting in Uvalde, Texas, that left at least 18 children and one teacher dead. In her statement, the Senator called for a suspension of the Senate’s filibuster rule to enable a majority of Senators to pass commonsense gun safety reforms that widespread majorities of Americans support to save lives.

“What happened in Texas today is every parent's nightmare. I’m heartbroken for these families and angry as hell at Republicans’ shameless inaction to save the lives of innocent children. We know how to stop these attacks from happening as often as they do. We know there will be another and another and another attack in the weeks and months ahead if we do nothing. And we know who is preventing action. The Senate should immediately—at a 50-vote threshold—vote on commonsense gun safety reforms that the American people have demanded for too long. For every victim of this tragedy and every tragedy before it, enough must be enough.”

Republican Rep. Mary Miller Statement:

Congresswoman Mary Miller (R-IL) issued the following statement on the tragedy in Uvalde, Texas:

“Chris and I are grieving for the families in Uvalde as they face this unimaginable loss, and we are praying for the Lord to comfort and guide the entire Uvalde community through this dark time. It's shocking that President Biden would use this tragedy to make a political speech last night, where he called on Congress to respond by restricting the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens who had nothing to do with this tragedy. I support securing our schools, funding the police departments that were defunded, and prosecuting criminals instead of releasing them. I will continue to support

the Second Amendment rights of my constituents in Illinois to defend their homes and their families in the same manner that President Biden, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader Schumer defend their homes and their families.”