



Michele Reynolds
State Senator
3rd Senate District

Ohio Senate
Senate Building
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, Ohio 43215
(614) 466-8064

****Senate Bill 313 – Sponsor Testimony****

Chair Dolan, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Sykes , and members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 313, known as Alyssa's Law. I'm honored to be here today to discuss why this legislation is essential for enhancing the safety of our schools and protecting the students, teachers, and staff who are the lifeblood of our educational communities.

****The Inspiration Behind Alyssa's Law****

This bill is named in memory of Alyssa Alhadeff, a vibrant 14-year-old who tragically lost her life in the 2018 Parkland school shooting in Florida. Alyssa's story is a heart-wrenching reminder of the stakes we face and the urgency with which we must act. Her mother, Lori Alhadeff, has channeled unimaginable grief into relentless advocacy to ensure that no other parent endures the same loss. Alyssa's Law has already been enacted in states like Florida, New Jersey, and Texas, demonstrating its effectiveness in creating safer school environments. Now, it is Ohio's turn to take this vital step forward.

****Recent Tragedies Reinforce the Need****

Recent events, such as the shooting in Winder, Georgia, serve as stark reminders of the ever-present threats faced by our schools. The names Christian Angulo, Mason Schurmerhorn, Richard Aspinwall, and Christina Irimie represent not just individuals, but families and communities torn apart by violence. These stories compel us to act—not just react—and to strengthen our schools' capacity to respond swiftly when the unthinkable occurs.

****Overview of SB 313****

Senate Bill 313 requires all public and chartered nonpublic schools in Ohio to implement a wearable panic alert system by the 2025-2026 school year. This system will empower staff with a silent, wearable device capable of sending immediate alerts to local emergency services and initiating a campus-wide lockdown. The goal is simple: to save lives by reducing response times during critical moments.

To further enhance emergency response, the bill mandates that security data, such as camera feeds, building maps, and access controls, be accessible to local law enforcement. This ensures that first responders have the information they need to act effectively in an emergency.

****Funding for Implementation****

SB 313 also includes a \$25 million appropriation for fiscal year 2026 to assist schools with the costs of implementing these systems. This funding demonstrates our commitment to proactive, preventive safety measures that protect our students and educators.

****Why This Legislation Matters****

School safety must be a priority. While traditional emergency protocols play a role, they often fall short in providing the immediacy needed during a crisis. The panic alert system proposed by SB 313 bridges that gap, giving educators a critical tool to call for help without delay. We have seen firsthand how similar systems have helped mitigate potential tragedies, such as in the incident at Apalachee High School, where quick action prevented greater loss.

The question should not be why we need this now, but rather, how can we afford not to implement it? Just as we require fire alarms and sprinkler systems to prevent disaster, so too should we provide modern solutions that address the current threats our schools face. The investment in this technology is a small price to pay for the safety and peace of mind it brings.

****Conclusion****

SB 313 is more than legislation—it is a promise to protect our children and those who dedicate their lives to their education. By passing this bill, we honor Alyssa's memory and the memories of countless others affected by school violence. We signal that Ohio is committed to leading in the protection of its most precious resource—our children.

Thank you for your attention. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.