



HB 564: Statewide Gun Free Schools Senate Outreach & Talking Points

What Does the Bill Do?

The federal Gun Free Schools Act prohibits students from bringing firearms into schools, and the Gun Free Schools Zone Act prohibits all other persons from bringing firearms within 1,000 feet of school property unless they are licensed by the state to carry a firearm. While federal law establishes gun free school zones with qualifications, gaps in state law and a recent statement from the Attorney General's office has left school districts and police departments in murky water on enforcement and jeopardizes safe spaces for our children to learn and grow. HB 564 seeks to clarify that our elementary, middle, and high schools are gun free. It is critical that this measure passes. If an adult brings a firearm into a school in New Hampshire right now, local school districts and police departments face real challenges in how to appropriately deal with it in light of the major gaps in state law (they are told to contact a regional Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms agent). The vast majority of states – 47 of them – and the District of Columbia prohibit carrying or possessing a firearm on K-12 school property or events. Only Hawaii, New Hampshire, and Wyoming do not.

Elected Official Contacts

Use the General Court website to find contact information for your State Senator:

<http://gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/default.aspx>

Governor Chris Sununu: (603) 271-2121

Talking Points

If you get voicemail, please leave a detailed message and ask them to support HB 564.

- My name is _____ and I live in (town / city). *(Give a little background about yourself).*
- I am calling to ask you to support House Bill 564 which would clarify statewide gun free schools in New Hampshire.
- *[Share a personal story or example about why you support gun free schools. Suggestions include safe learning environments, providing school officials and local police departments the ability to respond appropriately, etc. – be careful not to say that gun free schools will stop all gun violence but focus on the fact that right now we are putting students in a dangerous situation]*
- Can I count on you to support HB 564? *(Record answer and report back)*

Report Back

Please report all responses back to zandra@granitestateprogress.org. Thank you!



HB 564 Statewide Gun Free Schools Talking Points

Guns do not belong in our schools. Most people do not realize there is no state law preventing guns in New Hampshire elementary, middle, and high schools.

- The federal Gun Free Schools Act prohibits students from bringing firearms into schools, and the Gun Free Schools Zone Act prohibits all other persons from bringing firearms within 1,000 feet of school property unless they are licensed by the state to carry a firearm.
- But [state law](#) does not prohibit guns in schools and a recent statement from the Attorney General's office [has left local school districts and police departments](#) in murky water on enforcement and jeopardizes safe spaces for our children to learn and grow.
- Right now, someone could bring a gun into a school and unless they issue threats or start shooting students, school administrators and local police departments have little recourse. Meanwhile, school procedure is to go into lockdown.
- The presence of firearms in our schools disrupts learning environments and takes school personnel and resources away from their primary job of teaching our children.

There is a bill in the State Legislature to clarify gun free school zones in New Hampshire.

- The vast majority of states – 47 of them – and the District of Columbia prohibit carrying or possessing a firearm on K-12 school property or events. Only Hawaii, New Hampshire, and Wyoming do not.
- New Hampshire is putting its students, educators, school districts, and police departments at risk by not making it abundantly clear that school districts and police departments can enforce gun free schools. This is a major insurance liability and public relations crisis for our schools at best – and the loss of student and educator lives at worst.

Federal and state laws ensuring that schools are gun-free zones have helped make K-12 schools even safer, significantly reducing gun violence in these places.

- School-associated student homicide rates decreased after the federal laws restricting guns within 1,000 feet of schools were adopted in the early 1990's.

We have a responsibility to ensure our students' safety. Let's empower our school districts and police departments to take action to deter a dangerous situation before it becomes a deadly one.
