



California Lawmaker Introduces Bill Requiring Armed Police in Every School

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SACRAMENTO, CA – Attempting to buck a trend in California and the rest of the nation to outlaw law enforcement in schools, California Assemblymember Bill Essayli (R-Riverside) this week introduced a measure in the Legislature here to mandate at least one armed police officer on campus in every California school during regular school hours.

Assembly Bill 3038, Essayli argues, “California has experienced 96 school shootings between 2018 and 2023. If we want to get serious about preventing school shootings and stopping them before they can happen, we need good guys, and girls, with guns, ready to act,” reported the Sacramento Bee.

The Bee noted the “bill is likely to be opposed by the American Civil Liberties Union, which in 2021 published a report identifying the dangers of more police officers in public schools.”

“The data conclusively show harmful and discriminatory policing patterns in schools. School police contribute to the criminalization of tens of thousands of California students, resulting in them being pushed out of school and into the school-to-prison pipeline,” according to an ACLU of Southern California statement.

The report, said the ACLU, found Black students were 7.4 times more likely to be arrested in schools with law enforcement than in schools without armed police, and Latino students were 6.9 times more likely to be arrested. Students with disabilities were 4.6 times more likely.

“The data also show that Black students were disproportionately more likely to be handcuffed, arrested and subjected to harsh penalties compared to students as a whole,” said the Bee.

“No school in California should have a permanent police officer. School districts should not be able to create their own police departments or reserve forces, nor should they coordinate with any outside law enforcement agency to station law enforcement on a school campus,” the ACLU said in its recommendation.

The libertarian-leaning Cato Institute and the National Education Association have both also questioned whether police in the schools make schools safer, added the Bee.

Essayli is supporting more guns, introducing Assembly Bill 3037, which would make it easier for the courts to add firearm-related sentencing enhancements. Sentencing enhancements can result in substantially more prison time for the accused.

“This is a smart gun law. The laws they (Democrats) like to pass, I call them dumb laws, they go after people like CCW holders. We like smart gun laws,” Essayli said of his bill.

Essayli also unveiled Assembly Bill 3039, which would make it much easier for potential jurors to be dismissed from juries just because of their views on the police.

A measure signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom in 2020 “made it so that jurors could not be subject to ‘peremptory challenge’ on the basis of their distrust in law enforcement unless the disqualifying party can prove ‘by clear and convincing evidence’ that their rationale for disqualifying the potential juror ‘is unrelated to the prospective juror’s identity group and that the reasons articulated affect the prospective juror’s ability to be fair and impartial in the case,’” according to a 2020 bill analysis.

The Bee speculated the bills face a “likely uphill climb in the Legislature, with Democrats controlling a supermajority in both houses and criminal justice reform proponents in control of key committees.”