



# KEN SKOWRONSKI

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August 3, 2017

Dear Chairman Thiesfeldt and members of the Committee on Education,

Thank you for holding a public hearing today on Assembly Bill 427, which relates to firearm safety classes for high school students. It's very fitting that we're having this hearing today as the Department of Natural Resources declared August the National Shooting Sports Foundation's inaugural National Shooting Sports Month. It is dedicated to safety and skill-building in this growing sport.

Wisconsin has long celebrated its sporting heritage. Popularity of sport shooting programs at the middle and high school level are growing rapidly in Wisconsin. The Scholastic Clay Targets Program (SCTP) has enrolled over 3,500 student athletes encompassing 115 different schools around the state. Last year alone, 4,369 student athletes from across Wisconsin competed in 12 different sport shooting events at the state tournament. In July of this year, 420 students of the Wisconsin Scholastic Clay Target Program participated in Scholastic Shooting Sports Foundation Ohio National sport shooting competition where they were incredibly successful.

Last week, I had the chance to visit the Olympic Training Village in Colorado Springs. There, I met with Tom Wondrash, Director of the Scholastic Clay Target Shooting Program. Tom also happens to be a Burlington resident. He introduced me to some Wisconsin Teams that were competing in the International Style National Team Competition, including students from Burlington and Union Grove.

With so many students participating in these activities, it is important to offer students an opportunity to better understand the safety and responsibilities that firearms require.

Not every student participating in a trap and target shooting has participated in hunter's safety program, nor are they entirely familiar with firearm safety. As a former hunter safety instructor for 19 years, I know firsthand how important firearm safety is before handing a student a weapon. While talking with Tom and his students, they expressed excitement for a firearm safety education course and mentioned that their non-competing friends may join the sport after taking the class.

In developing this legislation, my office talked with 33 coaches, club owners, and parent volunteers about the after school shooting programs in their area. Those 33 coaches represent 1,300 student participants. While talking with these individuals, the one thing that kept coming

up was safety. Ensuring student safety for this rapidly growing sport was the motivation for this bill.

Assembly Bill 427 asks the Department of Public instruction to work with an outside organization to create a firearm safety curriculum for high school students. This course would aid students in knowledge of firearm safety and mechanics. Many groups already have curriculums that can be used as guides. Arizona's School Gun Safety Program developed by the Arizona Department of Public Safety is a course in place currently that could serve as an example. Once it is created, Department of Natural Resources is asked to review it. Wisconsin High Schools would then have the option to implement the course as an elective. School districts would not be required to implement the course, nor would students be required to take it. Course instructors must be certified by a national organization. Many of the coaches we talked to held numerous certificates. Some include: Scholastic Clay Target Program Double Goal Coaching, Chief of Police, SWAT trainer, National Rifle Association Level 1 or 2 shotgun instructor, Hunters Safety instructor, Boy Scouts of America Rifle instructors,. There are even schools that have former Olympic athletes as coaches. As a way to further ensure the safety of everyone involved, this bill states that live ammunition is NOT allowed in the classroom.

Other states have passed similar bills focused on firearm education including nearby states Michigan and Minnesota. In 2013, Former Democrat Governor Jay Nixon of Missouri signed a bill into law that would teach the National Rifle association's Eddie the Eagle program to first graders. In 2015, Louisiana passed an elementary school firearm education bill with overwhelming bipartisan support. Idaho recently introduced a firearm safety education in schools bill, and AB 427 most resembles a North Carolina bill which was also introduced this year.

I'd like to thank the members of the committee for listening today. I'd also like to highlight the coaches and students that are joining us today.

Wednesday, August 03, 2017

Thank you Mr. chairman and members of the committee.

My name is Jeff Rowsam. I live in rural Brown County WI.

I am a member of three shooting clubs in Wisconsin and serve on the board of directors with the Wisconsin Firearms Owners Ranges Clubs and Educators

Since receiving my first formal shooting safety instruction at Madison East High School in 1969, I have been a competitor, instructor and team coach in various shooting sports including small bore and high power target rifle, target pistol and trap, skeet and sporting clays shooting events.

Today young athletes that show interest in participating in these sports have to rely exclusively for instruction by unpaid volunteers with offsite facilities including classrooms and ranges. The shooting equipment is being provided by generous private clubs and sponsors.

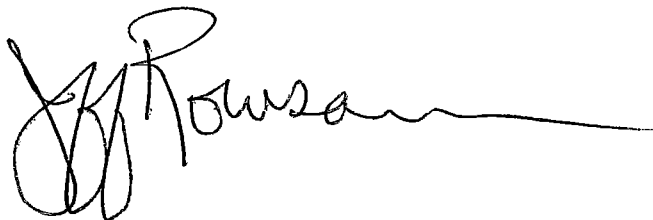
I am pleased to see that interest and participation in high school level shooting sports has grown significantly in recent years. Our volunteers and their clubs statewide have doubled their efforts to meet the needs of these new athletes. The amount of new participation has strained the available volunteer manpower. The high school shooting sports require consideration of more than private volunteers to meet the need for a curriculum of consistent firearms safety training. School districts that have significant numbers of students wanting to participate in sanctioned shooting sports should consider their role in supporting a growing program.

Just as we expect that students in vocational classes will receive instruction by the school in the safe operation of classroom lab and shop equipment. The same expectation extends that school sports coaches will provide instruction for athletes to safely participate in any of the popular contact sports. Football players, baseball players, wrestlers and hockey players to name some, all receive instruction on the use of Head, Eye, Ear, Face, Knee and Elbow protective equipment and the rules to avoid dangerous maneuvers.

The same expectation should extend to the school providing a consistent grounding in the safe conduct of contests where firearms are the predominant equipment in sponsored sports.

I have reviewed the proposed legislation Assembly bill AB 427 "Firearms education for high school pupils" and am in favor of creating the safety program.

Thank You for your consideration

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Rowsam". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

## OUTDOORS

# Wisconsin earns reputation for youth shooting programs



The Lake Country Action Shooters won several top awards at the 2016 SASP National Championship.  
Credit: Contributed photo

July 27, 2016

In the sporting universe, Wisconsin is known far and wide as the home of a highly successful professional football franchise and as a choice destination for hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreation.

Thanks to a bevy of successful youth programs — many in southeastern Wisconsin — the Badger State has a sterling reputation in another field, the shooting sports.

The performance of Wisconsin squads and individuals at the 2016 Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP) and Scholastic Action Shooting

Program (SASP) National Championships cemented the state's standing as a national leader among youth shooting sports.

The SCTP and SASP offer shooting development programs and competitions for students from fourth grade through college.

"Wisconsin has established a pedigree, a tradition," said Ben Berka, of Huxley, Iowa, president and of the Scholastic Shooting Sports Foundation, sponsor of the SCTP and SASP. "It's absolutely no surprise when a Wisconsin team takes first. In fact, many people expect it."

The programs "provide student athletes with a supportive environment where shooting sports serve as catalysts for teaching life lessons and skills that emphasize positive character traits and citizenship values," according to the SSSF. "Throughout all training, practice and competitions, we continue to instill in our participants a commitment to safe firearm handling, teamwork and leadership."

The 2016 nationals were held July 9-16 at the Cardinal Shooting Center in Marengo, Ohio. The event drew 2,369 competitors from 34 states to participate in trap, skeet and sporting clays through SCTP, and action rifle and action pistol events through SASP.

The SCTP had 4,576 event entries (up 74 over 2015) and SASP had 530 entries (up 174 over 2015).

The competition is divided into age groups and offers individual and team events.

In a word, Wisconsin participants were dominant.

Among the shotgun events, the Central Falcons of Kenosha County won national High Over All (HOA) titles in both varsity and high school divisions, as well team titles in high school skeet, varsity skeet, high school sporting clays and varsity double skeet.

The Central Falcons set a record for most national SCTP titles at a single event, according to the organization's database.

The HOA titles are reflective of consistently high scores across disciplines from a squad's five members. The team titles show the strength and depth of the squad.

"This was the culmination of a long-range plan and lots of hard work by the kids," said Al Chickerneo of Silver Lake, head coach of the Central Falcons. "There is no elevator. Everybody had to take the stairs."

The Central Falcons program functions as an activity of Westosha Central High School in Salem.

To get an idea of how well Wisconsin shotgun squads performed, consider the Varsity HOA results.

The Central Falcons were first, followed teams from Texas and Iowa. But Wisconsin teams took all the other slots in the top ten. In order, they were the Hudson Raider Shooting Club, Marquette Hilltoppers Trap Team, Burlington Demons Shooting Team, Waterford Wolverine Shooting Team, Union Grove Broncos Shooting Team, Wilmot Panthers Shotgun Team and Beaver Dam Trap Team.

The trophy take by Wisconsin was also impressive on the SASP side. In this competition, participants are timed as they attempt targets with pistols or rifles (.22 or centerfire, with iron sights or optics).

The Lake Country Action Shooters won their third straight national title in varsity centerfire pistol, as well as first place in centerfire pistol senior varsity, rifle iron varsity and rifle optics varsity. The winning team was Cameron Thouati de Tazoult, Andy Lamm, Dylan Richman and Teagan Richman.

Teagan Richman also won three individual golds in 9mm centerfire pistol for senior varsity women, rifle optics for varsity women, and rifle iron for varsity women.

And Thouati de Tazoult won the individual title at 9mm centerfire pistol for senior varsity men with the best performance in any men's category.

The Lake Country team draws from schools in Hartland, New Berlin and Oconomowoc and is coached by Dave Richman of North Lake, who formed the team in 2012.

The team has two home clubs, Oconomowoc Sportsman's Club and Stone Bank Sportsman's Club. Both have outdoor ranges.

"Maybe some day we'll have an indoor range," Richman said. "But this shows you what these kids are capable of, even when they are faced with tough training conditions and a shorter season than many of their competitors."

Other national titles were won in SCTP by Cedar Grove-Belgium and in SASP by Ozaukee. For a complete list of results, visit [sssfoonline.org](http://sssfoonline.org).

So what's the secret to Wisconsin's success?

It's not simply participation, as Wisconsin sent 320 competitors to the event, second to Tennessee (503).

It has more to do with effort, dedication and the high level of in-state competition.

On the shotgun side, the Central Falcons' success is years in the making. This year it had 85 students in the program and 15 coaches.

The team won conference, state and national titles this year. It had perhaps its toughest battle at the Wisconsin SCTP tournament, where it beat Hudson in the HOA team event by one target (1,110 were possible).

Chickerneo, the team's head coach, said he has tried to borrow from the best practices at other winning programs, including the Burlington Demons. The Demons helped set a high standard in Wisconsin SCTP, winning many state titles and tournaments as well as two national team titles (2011 and 2013).

Among the keys: The Central Falcons practice year-round, including at the Conservation Club of Kenosha County in Bristol, Winchester Gun Club in Franksville and in Chickerneo's garage.

The last one take's a little explaining. Chickerneo has a DryFire Shotgun Simulator that mounts on a shotgun and allows coaches to check the fit of a firearm and shooters to practice on a video system.

"We call it practice with a purpose," Chickerneo said. "It's a big help. But it's only one thing."

Chickerneo credits the team's success to his three main assistants, Mark Karow of Salem for 9th to 12th grade programs, Roger Haigh of Pleasant Prairie for the 4th to 8th graders and Jerry Van Pelt of Salem for all skeet training.




"If you had to say one thing, it's building the foundation," Chickerneo said. "It's teaching safety and responsibility and hard work. Hitting your targets and success follows."

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#### About Paul A. Smith

Paul A. Smith covers outdoors and conservation issues.

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## PAUL A. SMITH ARCHIVE

**Jul 30, 2016 | Yellowstone only getting better with age**

**Jul 23, 2016 | Deer study aims to improve habitat at County Parks**

**Jul 20, 2016 | Program to provide fish to the needy**

**Jul 16, 2016 | Making the difficult choice to leave a Northwoods 'paradise'**

**Jul 13, 2016 | Anglers can catch, cut and release information**

**Jul 9, 2016 | Lower Wisconsin an ideal retreat**

**Jul 6, 2016 | Wisconsin among 12 states to share \$44 million for wetland conservation**

**Jul 2, 2016 | Anglers object to plan for Lake Michigan chinook stocking reductions**

**Jun 29, 2016 | Serious invasive species education blitz begins with a bit of humor**

**Jun 25, 2016 | Goal of UWM habitat study is to help restore fisheries in river**

**Jun 22, 2016 | Breeding duck population increases in Wisconsin**



**Jun 18, 2016 | A step toward fly-fishing simplicity**

**Jun 15, 2016 | Committee recommends 62% cut in chinook stocking on Lake Michigan**

**Jun 11, 2016 | Working the noon Walleye shift**

**Jun 8, 2016 | Wisconsin's spring turkey harvest up 11%**

**Find this article at:**

<http://archive.jsonline.com/sports/outdoors/wisconsin-earns-reputation-for-youth-shooting-programs-b99768429z1-388498261.html>

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.



# Veterans Afield™



A 501 (c) (3) Organization

BILL AB 427

07/24/2017

TO CHAIRMAN THIESFELDT & MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

WISCONSIN HAS ALWAYS BEEN A LEADER IN FIREARM TRAINING AND EDUCATION FOR OUR YOUNG ADULTS. BILL # 872 WAS INTRODUCED BY THEN GOV KNOWLES IN AUGUST OF 1967. THIS BILL WAS THE FIRST ONE TO GIVE YOUNG ADULTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET FIREARM SAFETY TRAINING. THE TRAINING SEED WAS PLANTED. IN 1985, THE HUNTER SAFETY CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT WAS INTRODUCED. THIS REQUIRES ANYONE BORN AFTER JAN OF 1973 TO TAKE A CERTIFIED HUNTER SAFETY COURSE BEFORE THEY CAN GET A WISCONSIN HUNTING LICENSE. NOW WE HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO CARRY ON THIS TRADITION AND CONTINUE EDUCATING OUR YOUNG ADULTS IN FIREARM SAFETY BY SUPPORTING BILL AB 427.

I AGREE THAT READING, WRITING AND ARITHMETIC ARE IMPORTANT, THATS WHY KIDS GO TO SCHOOL, TO LEARN THOSE SKILLS. WHEN A YOUNG ADULT FINDS A BOOK, THEY CAN READ IT, WHEN BUYING SOMETHING, THEY CAN DEAL WITH IT BECAUSE THEY KNOW MATH, THEY CAN COMMUNICATE BY WRITING A LETTER, THEY WERE TAUGHT THOSE SKILLS BY A TRAINED EDUCATOR. THE SAME YOUTH COMES HOME AND FINDS A LOADED (357) MAGNUM PISTOL, OR A LOADED (12 GA) SHOTGUN, IN THE CLOSET, UNDER THE BED OR IN A NIGHT STAND (NEITHER WITH A TRIGGER LOCK) AND THIS YOUTH HAS NO KNOWLEDGE OF HOW TO SAFELY HANDLE THOSE WEAPONS. THERE IS DANDER, DUE TO LACK OF PROPER TRAINING. THE STATE OF WISCONSIN INTRODUCED CONCEAL CARRY (6) YEARS AGO, AS OF APRIL OF 2016, THERE HAVE BEEN OVER 300,000 PERMITS ISSUED. HOW MANY OF THEM WERE FIRST TIME WEAPON OWNERS ? MOST WERE PURCHASED FOR HOME PROTECTION, MEANING THE WEAPONS WILL ALWAYS BE PRESENT IN THE HOME.

MANY SCHOOL DISTRICTS ARE ALREADY PRACTICING WHAT BILL AB 427 IS ASKING. THESE DISTRICTS ALREADY HAVE SHOOTING AND TRAP TEAMS IN PLACE. THEY ARE TEACHING FIREARM SAFETY AND GIVING THE STUDENTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRACTICE IT SAFELY. THIS BILL OFFERS THE OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL SCHOOLS TO PARTICIPATE REGARDLESS THE SIZE OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT. BILL AB 427 THROWS A SAFETY BLANKET OVER THE ENTIRE STATE TO EDUCATE OUR YOUNG ADULTS FIRARM SAFETY.

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**Veterans Afield™**



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BILL AB-427

PAGE (2)

THIS BILL AB-427 IS USER FRIENDLY, SCHOOLS ARE NOT FORCED TO PARTICIPATE. WHEN A SCHOOL ELECTS TO PARTICIPATE, THE STUDENTS OF THAT SCHOOL HAVE A CHOICE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FIREARM TRAINING OR NOT. WE NEED TO KEEP WISCONSIN'S TRADITION ALIVE AND STRONG AND WE CAN ACCOMPLISH THIS BY SUPPORTING BILL AB-427. MY ORGANIZATION (VETERANS AFIELD U.A.) KNOWS ABOUT FIREARM SAFETY AND HOW CRITICAL IT IS TO TEACH OUR YOUNG ADULTS THE SAFE AND PROPER WAY TO HANDLE FIREARMS. MY ORGANIZATION SUPPORTS THIS BILL 100%. REMEMBER THAT YOUTH THAT CAME HOME AND FOUND THOSE UNPROTECTED WEAPONS AT HOME, WITHOUT PROPER FIREARM TRAINING, HE OR SHE WILL NEED MORE THAN READING, WRITING AND ARITHMETIC SKILLS TO KEEP THAT YOUTH SAFE.

THANK YOU



PATRICK D. HORVATH  
PRESIDENT  
VETERANS AFIELD U.A.

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# COMPLETE PROGRAM OVERVIEW OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

## Suggested Hours Allocated to Each Block of Instruction

<u>Curriculum Element</u>	<u>Class Time</u>
<b>History of Firearms</b>	<b>18 Hours</b>
<b>Second Amendment</b>	<b>18 Hours</b>
<b>Firearms Safety</b>	<b>5 Hours Total</b>
• Firearms Safety in the Home	2
• Firearms Safety in the Field	3
<b>Law &amp; Community</b>	<b>8 Hours Total</b>
• Firearms Related Laws	4
• Hunting Laws & Regulations	4
<b>Firearms Operations &amp; Marksmanship</b>	<b>20 Hours</b>
• Rifle	4
• Shotgun	4
• Pistol	4
• Mental Dynamics of Peak Performance	8
<b>2-Day Range: Orientation &amp; Practical</b>	<b>16 Hours Total</b>
• Range Safety Orientation	1 Hour Each Day (X2)
• Range Practical Rifle	7 - Day 1
• Range Practical Shotgun	7 - Day 2
<b>Lifelong Shooting Sports &amp; Community Project</b>	<b>5 Hours</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>90 HOURS</b>



# TERRY MOULTON



WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

23<sup>RD</sup> SENATE DISTRICT

**From: Senator Terry Moulton**  
**To: Assembly Committee on Education**  
**Re: Testimony on Assembly Bill 427**  
**Relating to:** comprehensive firearm education for high school pupils  
**Date: August 3, 2017**

Mr. Chairman and committee members, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to you today about Assembly Bill 427, a bill that would require the Department of Public Instruction to create an optional curriculum for an elective course that teaches firearm safety.

Trap shooting and pistol shooting clubs and sports teams are emerging all over Wisconsin and are gaining strength in numbers and skill. For teens who come from a family that stresses gun safety or hunting, it is easy to join and get into the sport. However, for teens that do not have any familiarity with firearms, joining a shooting club, going out hunting, and learning about firearm safety can be difficult, particularly if they are not sure if they would even be comfortable handling a weapon.

Assembly Bill 427 would require DPI to create a curriculum with guidance from either the Department of Natural Resources or an agency or organization that specializes in firearm safety. School districts can adopt the curriculum for an elective course if they want. If a school district decides to offer this elective course, the course must be taught by someone who is certified in firearm safety.

An important thing to note is that this bill does not allow live ammunition in the classroom. School districts are not required to offer the class, nor are students required to take it. This bill will help schools that would like to provide this option for students who are looking to pursue firearm safety education for personal reasons or sports. It will also help students interested in taking a hunter's safety course in the future.

Please vote in favor of passage of Assembly Bill 427. An optional program does not force a school to do something they do not want to do, and increased firearm safety is never a bad thing. Thank you again for allowing me to submit testimony today.

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*Serving the 23rd Senate District*

**Testimony of State Senator Lena C. Taylor**  
**Assembly Committee on Education**  
**Assembly Bill 427 – Comprehensive Firearm Education**  
**For High School Pupils**  
**August 3, 2017**

Chairman Thiesfeldt, members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit written testimony on Assembly Bill 427, concerning comprehensive firearm education for high school students. This bill will require the state superintendent to develop an elective course in conjunction with the Department of Natural Resources, a law enforcement agency, or a different organization which specializes in firearms safety or certifies firearms instructors, so that our students are receiving proper firearm safety education. This bill will not require school districts to offer the course. This is a voluntary decision by both schools and students. However, it will require that if offered, that the course be taught or supervised by someone with training in firearms safety. This bill will prohibit live ammunition in the classroom.

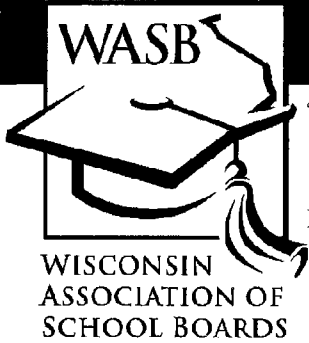
Keeping Wisconsin residents safe should be our top priority; so far we have not done the best job in ensuring that. During the past two hunting seasons, there have been a total of 34 accidents, including 6 fatalities. Half of those involved in these incidents were teenagers. By offering a firearms safety course as a high school elective, we may reduce hunting accidents and protect our youth participating in our state's hunting heritage.

Understand, firearm safety extends beyond hunting; it's a serious issue in our homes as well. At some point we must realize that the dangers of firearm accidents do occur in the homes of Wisconsinites and is a real threat to the overall safety of our community. One of the biggest issues that plagues our state is suicide, especially amongst teenagers. In Wisconsin from 2007 to 2011, there were over 10,000 reported suicides of individuals from the ages of 15-24; firearms were involved in over 4,000 of these cases. By offering a comprehensive firearm education program, not only will teens be given the proper education in firearms safety but they may also find a mentor in their instructor when it comes to firearm usage and safety. The instructor-pupil relationship of the course may, in fact, open a dialogue regarding mental health and gun safety. Students might become more comfortable in opening up to their instructors, or their peers, regarding firearms and the role they play in suicides.

Also important is the risk of accidental discharge when carrying, storing, or operating a firearm. Teenagers, in particular, are the most prone to these types of firearm accidents. A great way to address this is to educate firearm users on the best practices of gun ownership. Training requirements were a significant reason why I voted for concealed carry permits. As a high school elective, the young people most at risk of experiencing a firearm accident will have access to a comprehensive firearm education. Outside of the classroom setting, students may not have the time or financial means to take a firearm safety course. In addition, students who might not have taken a firearm safety course outside of school, might be interested in taking it for credit. More access to "firearm literacy"—an understanding of firearm usage and safety—will give greater respect to firearms because individuals will know the threat they pose, but also the safety measures to take.

Prudence and experience suggest that training is one of the best ways to encourage responsible gun ownership. This legislation will help students, who voluntarily participate in this elective course, to have access to a comprehensive firearm education. It will help students who may not otherwise participate in hunting sports an opportunity to learn more. It will help reduce risks of accidental discharge and may help in our fight to prevent suicides. Chairman Thiesfeldt, members of the committee, I urge you to support Assembly Bill 427.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony and for your attention.



"Leadership in Public School Governance"

JOHN H. ASHLEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

122 W. WASHINGTON AVENUE, MADISON, WI 53703  
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TO: Members, Assembly Committee on Education  
FROM: Dan Rossmiller, WASB Government Relations Director  
DATE: August 3, 2017  
RE: Assembly Bill 427, relating to comprehensive firearm education for high school pupils.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Dan Rossmiller. I am the Government Relations Director for the Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB). I am here on behalf of the 422 locally elected school boards in our state. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Assembly Bill 427. I am speaking today for information only.

The WASB has taken a neutral position on Assembly Bill 427. This bill would not impose any mandates on school boards; it would not require school boards to do anything. From that standpoint it allows the school board to retain local control and decision making about offering such instruction. Under the bill, whatever a board decides to do (or not do) is left up to the board. Further, under the bill, the class, if offered, would be an elective. So just as boards wouldn't be required to offer the class, students wouldn't be required to take the class.

We believe boards could already offer such classes if they wanted to, although there may be some practical issues with this that I will address later. The bill would provide some structure for such classes, by providing for DPI input into the curriculum, establishing qualifications for who may serve as an instructor for these classes and by prohibiting the presence or use of live ammunition.

While some of my members might support such instruction others would question the need for such instruction. Numerous school districts already offer hunter safety classes during summer school or outside of normal school hours, often partnering with private organizations to provide the instruction. Numerous other school districts have other independent offsite methods of providing hunter safety or gun safety. These courses, however offered, appear to be meeting local needs and typically focus on long guns. Many of my members who are concerned about this bill are concerned that it would add a focus on handguns.

Let me discuss some of the other issues and concerns we have identified with the bill as drafted.

1) Hunter education classes are not normally conducted during the school day. Presumably, the bill's authors intend that the classes contemplated under AB 427 would be offered during the normal school day for academic credit (i.e., credit that counts toward HS graduation). Some of my members wonder whether there is a semester's worth of material to be covered, let alone a full year. Perhaps we won't know until the DPI and the DNR develop the model curriculum. The amount of academic content may also determine how much credit a school board should grant for completion of this course; however, it appears the bill would leave this up to each school board to decide.

2) It is not clear whether school boards would have to follow the framework this bill sets up. Question: If a school board decides to offer a class on firearm safety would it have to follow the DPI/DNR curriculum or could it provide its own curriculum (i.e., not the curriculum required to be developed under the bill)?



3) Some school board members question whether pursuing this type of instruction is the best use of scarce educational resources. They note that schools are no longer required to provide driver's education classes, for example. Cars are dangerous if not properly handled and nearly every student will likely drive a car at some point, while a much smaller percentage are likely to handle firearms. Is traffic safety less important than firearm safety? What about teaching kids to become financially literate? (Also not required, although there is a bill on this.) What messages are we sending to students and to the public about the relative priority of these subject matters? Where does firearm safety rank compared to preparing students to succeed after graduation (academic skills, employability skills, college- and career- readiness skills)?

4) Generally, when schools offer classes for academic credit, student grades are assigned by a licensed teacher rather than, say, a paraprofessional, or a non-school employee. Under the bill, the instructor for these classes need not be a licensed teacher but could be merely someone who has completed the minimum training needed to obtain a Concealed Carry Weapons (CCW) license. Nothing in the bill would require that the instructor be someone who has demonstrated they know how to teach effectively or even someone who exercises good judgment. While I trust in my members' good and sound judgment and I trust that they will only hire or appoint well-qualified people to provide such instruction, this issue is a concern of some of my members.

5) It is unclear whether students would be expected to handle weapons in these classes. If so, this would seem to be potentially problematic under the following language in state law:

120.13(1)(bm) The school district administrator or any principal or teacher designated by the school district administrator shall suspend a pupil under par. (b) if the school district administrator, principal or teacher determines that the pupil, **while at school or while under the supervision of a school authority, possessed a firearm**, as defined in 18 USC 921 (a) (3). This paragraph does not apply to the possession of a firearm while legally hunting in a school forest if allowed under s. 120.13 (38). (emphasis added)

120.13(1)(c)2m. The school board shall commence proceedings under subd. 3. and expel a pupil from school for not less than one year whenever it finds that the pupil, **while at school or while under the supervision of a school authority, possessed a firearm**, as defined in 18 USC 921 (a) (3). Annually, the school board shall report to the department the information specified under 20 USC 8921 (d) (1) and (2). This subdivision does not apply to the possession of a firearm while legally hunting in a school forest if allowed under s. 120.13 (38). (emphasis added)

We have been working with Rep. Kleefisch on legislation to create an exemption to these provisions similar to the one provided for possession of a firearm while legally hunting in a school forest in order to accommodate school sponsored trap shooting clubs. We have language that could address this issue if the committee is interested in pursuing an amendment.

6) Would a child need permission from a parent or guardian to enroll in this class? Would a parent have the right to review the curriculum and instructional materials before giving such permission? (The bill is silent on these points.)

7) Provisions of the bill describing what the course must cover specifically require instruction, for example, on how to safely carry firearms and how to safely transport firearms; however, there is no mention of how to safely store firearms or about gun safes or trigger locks. Young children may be killed or injured when they happen upon a loaded weapon that has been left unattended. Wisconsin has an entire statutory section (see section 948.55, Wis. Stats.) devoted to leaving or storing a loaded firearm within the reach or easy access of a child. That statute imposes criminal penalties. Should a class on firearm safety make students aware of this statute and of safe storage practices?

8) Could a district offer these classes as online classes? This is unclear. ((The bill is silent on this point.) We note that under section 29.591(1)(am), Wis. Statutes., the DNR is required to offer online hunters education programs for persons who are at least 18 years of age. so presumably there are online hunter education classes on there.

9) Because we don't yet have the model curriculum, it is hard to predict what it would cost schools to offer such classes. It is also unclear what fees, if any, could be charged in association with such a class, although it appears that our state constitution **would not** permit student fees to be charged for a course, whether required or unrequired, for which credit is given toward graduation. Fees could be charged, however, if the class is not given credit toward graduation. Some clarification on this point would be useful.

We note that Some statutes explicitly permit school boards to charge certain fees for classes if a class is not given credit toward graduation. For example, section 121.41, Wis. Stats., permits a school board to establish and collect reasonable fees for any driver education program or part of a program which is neither required nor credited toward graduation. This fee may be waived for indigent pupils.

*Explanation:* Student fees may only be charged to the extent authorized by the Wisconsin Constitution and state law. The Wisconsin Supreme Court set forth rules and criteria for determining the validity of student fees in a 1974 court decision (*Board of Education v. Sinclair*). According to the Court, three requirements must be met before a student fee may be exacted:

1. The fee must not violate Article X, Section 3 of the Wisconsin Constitution, which provides that "the schools shall be free and without charge for tuition to all children between the age of 4 and 20 years."
2. The fee must be authorized by statute.
3. The fee must be reasonable.

The Supreme Court held that the constitutional requirement **does not** permit student fees to be charged for the following:

- the use of the school building, its maintenance or equipment therein;
- teacher instruction (including teacher salaries or benefits); and
- any course, required or unrequired, for which credit is given toward graduation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Assembly Bill 427. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.



To: Members, Assembly Education Committee  
From: Terri Phillips, Executive Director for the Southeastern Wisconsin Schools Alliance (SWSA)  
Date: August 3, 2017  
Re: Prepared testimony for the Assembly Education Committee re: AB 427

My name is Terri Phillips and I am the Executive Director for the Southeastern Wisconsin Schools Alliance, also known as the SWSA. I represent 30 public school districts in Southeastern Wisconsin who educate roughly 25% of the public school students in the state.

Although the SWSA is remaining neutral on AB427 (comprehensive firearm education course), we would like to offer some thoughts as you consider the implications of AB427.

- ❖ Currently, there are many organizations offering comprehensive hunter safety courses including the DNR and 4H. These courses are outstanding (my son completed a course several years ago) and offer a hands-on as well as textbook based approach to understanding gun safety.
- ❖ SWSA understands that AB427 isn't a mandate to teach firearm safety in public schools. However, it will require and divert scarce resources by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to partner with other organizations and develop a curriculum.
- ❖ AB427 brings up additional questions for our membership including:
  - Will this course be taught as part of physical education?
  - Who will be teaching this course and what might the certification be?
  - Is this a credit bearing activity, or are school districts just making this available to students?

Public schools are working very hard and focusing our efforts to develop academic and career plans with students to prepare them for life after K-12 education. We are partnering with technical colleges and businesses across the state to offer dual enrollment and career and technical education opportunities so students can explore potential career paths.

We are working with our legislative leaders to ensure that educational opportunities for students lead to strong careers for students and ultimately strengthen the economic vitality of Wisconsin. With that being said, a financial literacy course may be a higher priority than firearm education.

As you contemplate where to invest scarce public school dollars, we encourage you to ask the question, "**What is the expectation of the school day?**" This simple question may guide your decision as to what new curricula should be included in public schools.

We thank you for your service and appreciate your dedication to the State of Wisconsin. The SWSA would be more than happy to discuss this (or any other legislation) with you to continue this very important conversation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Terri A. Phillips'.

Terri Phillips, SWSA Executive Director  
Swsaexecdirector@gmail.com

Kim Kaukl  
Executive Director  
1755 Oakwood Circle  
Plain, WI 53577  
Cell Phone: (608) 553-0689  
kimkaukl@wirsa.org



President, Ken Kasinski CESA12  
President-Elect, Robert Smudde  
Secretary, Diana Bohman,  
Regional Public Library Rep  
Treasurer, Jerry Walters CESA11  
Past President, Jeremy Biehl CESA 5

August 3, 2017

Good morning, I am Kim Kaukl Executive Director of the Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance. WiRSA is here to today in a neutral and informational capacity on AB 427. We understand the possible safety aspect of teaching gun safety, but we do not feel this is a wise use of school time. We understand that this bill is not a mandate, but we are concerned that down the road it may become one. The present school day is packed very tight with graduation requirements for students and trying to squeeze in something more can be very difficult in many of our districts with limited resources and staff. We have a concern about finding competent gun safety instructors that understand how to work with students in a classroom setting. Finally, we are concerned about the extra burden being placed on the DPI to develop a curriculum for this course when there are already programs out there.

In conclusion, we feel this is a program that can be and is better provided outside the school day through various programs and outlets.

Thank you for your time and I ask that you carefully consider if this bill is truly needed.

Sincerely,  
*Kim Kaukl*

Kim Kaukl  
Executive Director of WiRSA



## **School Administrators Alliance**

*Representing the Interests of Wisconsin School Children*

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**TO:** Assembly Committee on Education  
**FROM:** John Forester, Executive Director  
**DATE:** August 3, 2017  
**RE:** AB 427 – Comprehensive Firearm Education for High School Pupils

The School Administrators Alliance (SAA) is testifying for information only on Assembly Bill 427, relating to comprehensive firearm education for high school pupils.

AB 427 requires the state superintendent to develop curriculum for a comprehensive firearm education course to be offered as an elective to high school pupils. The curriculum must be jointly developed with the Department of Natural Resources, a law enforcement agency, or an organization that specializes in firearms safety or that certifies firearms instructors. The bill also requires that, if a school district does offer such a course, the course must be taught or supervised by an individual who demonstrates proof of training in firearms safety.

The bill does not require a school district to offer the course, and that is why we are testifying for information only today. If the bill did include any type of instructional mandate, we would be opposed.

In anticipation of this hearing, I sought input on AB 427 from a broad cross-section of SAA members. I'd like to share with you some of their thoughts on the bill.

First of all, we are unsure of the problem the bill seeks to solve. In their co-sponsorship memo, the authors indicate that some students participating in trap and target shooting clubs have not taken a hunter safety course or may not be well versed in Wisconsin's sporting heritage. But it does not appear the authors are suggesting that there is a shortage of hunter safety courses in Wisconsin. What's more, we believe that school districts already have the authority to offer a firearms safety course, in response to the needs of their students and their community. In fact, quite a number of superintendents have shared with me that their districts provide space for the hunter safety course during summer school or outside of the normal instructional day.

Several SAA members have also suggested that, given how tightly most high schools schedule their course offerings, the reality is that if you add this course as an elective you will likely have to remove another elective academic course offering.

Finally, in the past couple of weeks, a few people, including a couple inside this building, have asked me "Why do you care about this bill at all? It doesn't require schools to do anything." But,

I guess I'm still idealistic enough to believe that that reason, in and of itself, is not a good enough reason for this bill to become the law of the land here in Wisconsin.

Our educators in Wisconsin face some enormous challenges in meeting the objectives we have for K-12 education. In a nutshell, I would characterize these primary objectives as follows:

- To improve student achievement for all students.
- To close those stubborn achievement gaps.
- To make sure all Wisconsin students graduate college and career ready.

We currently have lots of statutory requirements directed at schools, some that help schools to achieve these objectives and some that don't. Every legislative session we see several bills that would create new instructional mandates. And we all know that there are scores of interest groups that believe that schools should be providing children with instruction in many new subject areas in order to meet laudable public policy goals. In short, these proposals, if adopted, would lead school districts to take time, money and focus away from their primary objectives.

Mr. Chairman, you know that I have great respect for the work of this committee and the challenges you face. I see this committee as the gatekeeper in the Assembly for education policy. As such, I would just pose a couple of questions for the committee as you consider this legislation.

- First, how will this bill help school districts to meet our education policy objectives?
- Finally, given the very big challenges that we face and the important objectives we are working hard to achieve, "How would you like us to use the precious minutes we have in the limited number of instructional days in each school year?"

Thank you for your consideration of our views. If you should have any questions on our thoughts on AB 427, please call me at 608-242-1370.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
WISCONSIN

612 W. Main Street, #200  
Madison, WI 53703-4714

(608) 256-0827  
lwvwi.org

August 3, 2017

To: Assembly Committee on Education

Re: Opposition to Assembly Bill 427

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin registers in opposition to Assembly Bill 427 which would require the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop a curriculum for an elective firearm education course for high school students. While school districts would not be mandated to offer such a course, resources (financial and employee time) of the DPI would be required at a time when financial constraints on the fundamental responsibilities of public education are seriously inadequate.

Thank you.

As a high school Junior in Wisconsin I feel as though this bill would be an inappropriate use of our state's educational resources. In reading a few articles about the bill, I learned that one of the justifications for this bill is the increased interest in trap shooting and hunting in Wisconsin, with between 3,000 - 4,000 students participating in these activities. This is a small number, and using our assets to benefit such a small percentage of students is simply unfair to the majority of kids in Wisconsin schools. The time and money spent developing this class, and the instructional time during the school day, would be far better spent on preparing students for life after school with personal finance classes or technical training. If employers such as Amazon and Foxconn are moving into Wisconsin, such classes would do more to prepare high school students for potential jobs.

Activities like trapshooting are extracurricular; why should they receive more support, especially class time, than extracurricular activities like Robotics and Model UN? To me, it seems like there's more going on with this bill than just gun safety education. For example, the bill mentions that the curriculum would cover different types of firearms, but if it's aimed at trap-shooting and hunting, how many different types of firearms need to be in the classroom? This bill could act as a gateway to allowing handguns in school. More guns in schools would be unsafe, and this bill seems sinister in that it would allow the gun industry to be presented to kids at a younger age and create even more of an emphasis on guns as a part of American culture. I think our efforts should be aimed at fewer guns in school, not more.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sam Berger

7632 North Beach Drive

Fox Point, WI 53217



Wisconsin Assembly Education Committee  
Testimony in Opposition of AB427, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017

My name is John Cioci, I live in Montrose Township and my sons went to Verona Area schools. I am opposed to AB427. The public school system has many areas of instruction that need to be concentrated on and which all of our state's students need to learn. Pandering to special interests should not be the role of the school system and it is difficult for me to see the proposed legislation as anything other than that. The bill seems to be an obvious gift to the gun industry and the NRA, a gun manufacturers lobbying group that does not need to increase its influence on the citizens of Wisconsin and has no business being involved in the school system.

While gun safety is important for those who choose to own and use firearms, the public school system is not the right place for such training. If the legislature is concerned about gun owners being well trained and educated they should start by regulating the ways people buy and sell guns and the laughable level of training currently required to obtain a concealed carry permit in the state. If students and families are interested in getting training for firearms plenty of options, outside the school system, already exist. Offering such courses in schools will be at the expense of other, more widely valued, areas of study.

As a parent, I would be uncomfortable with the dynamic that such classes would likely setup in the schools. It would bring a very controversial, politically charged issue into the schools in a way that is sure to inflame the divide among students, teachers and administrators instead of concentrating scarce resources on traditional, agreed upon educational goals.

Who is asking for the legislation and who is opposed? My guess is that the NRA and gun dealers make up the majority of the support for the bill while parents and educators are more likely to be opposed. That division in support should give legislators pause.

Legislators need to be mindful to the implications of their actions on those with different values and priorities. **Many parents, myself included, will never be comfortable mixing guns and schools.**

Opposition to Assembly Bill #127  
Scott Marrese-Wheeler  
McFarland, Wisconsin 53558

Good day. Thank you for this opportunity to speak. My name is Rev. Scott Marrese-Wheeler. In addition to serving as the pastor of the Cambridge Presbyterian Church. I am a teacher at McFarland High School and Middle School. I am also a parent of soon to be senior at McFarland High School.

I have over 30 years of experience working with our young people. The students I teach and minister to come from various geographical, political, socio-economic, religious and cultural backgrounds. They have vary different learning styles and abilities in the classroom and in a communal setting.

As a teacher and pastor, I have been supportive of their extra-curricular activities, including those young people who like to hunt or trap shoot. McFarland has a club sport called the Spartan Clay Busters. I want to emphasis that it is a "Club" sport, and not a sanctioned WIAA sport.

I believe my 30 years of experience working with youth in a religious and educational setting, allows me to say, in the best biblical, theological, and academic words that your proposed bill, AB #~~127~~ 427 has nothing to do with promoting the club sport of "Trap/Skeet" shooting. It is not even really about teaching our students safety. It has nothing to do with promoting the health and well being of our students, our neighborhoods, our community and our great state. If it really was simply about the sport of trap shooting, then your bill would only deal with shotguns. Instead, this bill allows students to learn how to use handguns and ~~assault~~ rifles, which they are not even old enough to own.

The best educators for teaching gun safety are trained, licensed instructors who would do so at a gun club or shooting range. A public high school classroom is NOT the place to ~~do so~~ teach this type of class.

I support any youth who would like to take a hunter safety course. I would support any youth who wants to join a skeet shooting club. This proposed bill is not supportive of either of those things. It is simply another assault on our good senses, our schools, and our students to introduce guns into more public places. The gun manufacturers and gun lobby simply see this as another way to make a profit. I also wonder about the racial implications of your bill. *as it relates to rural districts versus inner city*

*Many of* The students and youth I work with struggle emotionally and mentally. They face many challenges in their home lives and with their peers. They are stressed, have anxiety, and deal daily with depression. As *way* to cope with their pent up emotions, ~~many~~ *some* play violent video games, where they can shoot and kill, in vary graphic images, another person. Introducing them to handguns, ~~assault~~ rifles, as well as hunting rifles, is such a bad idea, even a dangerous one, further glorifying the use of them. *in real life.*

Outside of car accidents, teenage suicide is the second leading cause of death among young people ages 12-18. Well over half of those deaths involve a gun. Each year, 30,000 people are killed by guns. Each day, and even as we speak at this very moment, another child, woman or man, is being shot and killed by a gun. Today, 22 veterans will kill themselves, most using a gun. Since President John F. Kennedy was shot and killed, one million Americans have been killed by guns in our country, and that does not talk about the number who were wounded, including our law enforcement officers.

*AB* #427 Assembly Bill #~~127~~ 427 offers no additional educational benefits to our teenagers, our schools, our communities, or our public places that would decrease these statistics. It will only lead to more gun violence - accidental, intentional, and suicidal.

Rev. Fred Davie, says: "In tragedy after tragedy this year, we've seen that the epidemic of gun violence is not contained to one community or group, but that it touches us all regardless of geography or race, age or occupation, religion or political party. And when it does, the grief that tears at the heart of a mother in the inner city of New York is the same as that of a brother in rural Wisconsin (Iowa) and a daughter in the suburbs of Ohio." (God and Guns: Faith Leaders on Gun Violence)

So let me appeal to you not as a minister, nor as a teacher, nor as a parent, but to you, who like me, is a human being. I have no money to offer you as the gun lobby does nor power to influence or if need be threaten you during the next election as the NRA does. I simply am one human being speaking to another human being, asking you to do what is best for all human beings by finally taking a stand against the madness of our gun crazed cultural and the growing epidemic of gun violence before another person is shot and killed. Together, let us work to heal our nation, and not cause further harm to anyone. Please, vote "No" to Assembly Bill #~~127~~ 427.

427

TO: State Assembly Committee on Education  
FROM: Ann Muenster  
RE: Assembly Bill 427  
DATE: August 3, 2017

Hello. My name is Ann Muenster. I have driven from Appleton today to voice my opposition to AB427. I am the wife of a former hunter and the mother of two adult sons; neither of which have any interest in hunting.

The bill is stated to provide comprehensive firearm education. I am definitely in favor of comprehensive firearm education for all gun owners. However, I have read between the lines and found this bill to be nothing more than a marketing ploy of the gun industry to promote gun sales to a new generation. The gun industry sees the writing on the wall. With enthusiasm for hunting on the decline, as evidenced in my own family, manufacturers of guns and ammo need to look for a new market to keep their shareholders happy. They see high school shooting leagues as the answer. The recent development of shooting leagues has expanded from Minnesota to Wisconsin and North Dakota. Shooting leagues are introducing young adolescents to firearms before they're legally old enough to own one. Now if high schoolers want to join a shooting league, let them. Provide the gun training where the guns will be used; at the shooting range. We have three shooting ranges in our area and students with an interest are free to pursue it on their own time. Anyone who uses a firearm needs proper training, but it doesn't belong in schools.

Having our schools offer an elective course that brings guns into our schools makes no sense and introduces a serious risk. While ammunition will not be used in the course, what precautions could possibly be taken to guarantee that a student wouldn't bring ammunition to school unbeknownst to the instructor?

I also feel that it's wholly inappropriate for high school students to be introduced to handguns, as this bill would include. While handguns are now used for hunting by some, they are not used by trap or skeet shooting clubs and at one of our local gun ranges, the Twin City Rod & Gun Club, there is a rule concerning handguns. It reads: No one under the age of 18 will handle or fire a handgun. If a gun club recognizes that youth should not have direct contact with a handgun, why don't the sponsors of this bill?

Furthermore, at a time when resources within our schools are stretched to the limit due to revenue caps and inadequate funding, adding an unnecessary elective course makes it even more difficult to provide a quality education for every student.

Please do not proceed with Assembly Bill 427.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Ann Muenster  
3528 Hillsborough Drive  
Appleton, WI  
920-277-9792  
[themuensters@sbcglobal.net](mailto:themuensters@sbcglobal.net)

AB427

8-3-17

To: Representative Thiesfeldt (Chair) — *Com. on Education*  
Representative Kitchens (Vice-Chair)

**On 09.27.2006** — a gunman entered Platte Canyon High School, Bailey, Colorado, held seven girls hostage and ultimately shot and killed Emily Keyes. During the time she was held hostage, Emily sent her parents these text messages: 'I love you guys' and 'I love u guys. k?'

**Emily Keyes has family in Madison, WI.** She is the grand daughter of Corinne Stoddard, who is present. As well as other family members who are also present at this Public Hearing. My daughter, Ellen Stoddard-Keyes, was raised in Madison and attended our schools, is the mother of Emily and still lives in Colorado. Emily's kindness, spirit, fierce joy, and the dignity and grace shown by the Keyes family following this tragic event define the core of The "I Love You Guys" Foundation.

\* After extensive research, this Foundation developed the **Standard Response Protocol (SRP)**. Action oriented, **Standard Response Protocol (SRP)** is based not on individual scenarios but on the response to any given situation. Like the Incident Command System (ICS), **SRP** demands a specific vocabulary but also allows for great flexibility. The premise is simple - there are four specific actions that can be performed during an incident. When communicating these, the action is labeled with a "Term of Art" and is then followed by a "Directive." Execution of the action is performed by active participants, including students, staff, teachers and first responders. The **SRP** is used in **1500** school districts throughout the **United States**, including the entire New York and Brooklyn school districts.

Four(4)-H offers basically the same class - realistically, schools can align with the local 4-H clubs and offer the class off-site at whatever shooting range 4-H uses.

I realize you are proposing that no live ammunition will be used and this is merely the mechanics of firearms. However, the mere PRESENCE of guns in schoolrooms is inappropriate.

\* Corinne Stoddard  
110 So Henry Street  
MADISON, WI 53703  
608-238-3265

*for more information:*

*The Foundation*  
363-426-3100  
Bailey, CO

August 1, 2017

Wisconsin State Legislators:

Because I am unable to be there in person to oppose WI Bill 427, I am writing to strongly opposed proceeding with this bill.

On May 31, 2017 I came to the Madison Courthouse to testify against Wisconsin Bill 169 allowing concealed carry in schools, allowing concealed carry with no permit and no training and reducing the age for concealed carry to 18 years of age. I arrived at approximately 9:15 AM and was asked if I would like to speak. I said yes. My colleagues and I were not asked to testify until 4:45-5:45PM that afternoon. We were the VERY last group to testify. There were many proponents of the bill that arrived after us who were asked to testify in the late morning and early afternoon. I am not sure why we were not asked to testify until near the end of the hearing, but I can imagine that the people who were choosing the order of testimony wanted fewer opponents to be heard and were hoping that we would leave. However, by staying for the whole day it did allow me to see how many more people were opposed to this bill as were for it. And many of the people who spoke opposing the bill were representing large groups of people, for instance all of the Catholic School Systems. Most of those who were in favor of the bill passing were in a position to gain financially from the passage of the bill: Dealers, trainers and members of the NRA, etc.

It upsets me that there was such strong opposition to this bill allowing guns in schools and yet 2 months later, we again have to make our voice heard about opposition to guns in schools via Bill 427. This time it is under the guise of a gun training course in our schools. And this training does not only include rifles but also handguns that are not appropriate for target or skeet shooting. Handguns are used to kill people. Currently children under the age of 18 cannot carry a handgun. I am afraid that when this bill is vehemently opposed, the next thing we will be testifying against is a bill asking that children who have had training be allowed to carry hand guns. And then this bill will be resurrected. I cannot imagine how this could possibly increase the safety of our children or our communities.

It does however seem to again line the pockets of the proponents of Bill 427. It makes children more likely to purchase guns, more likely to use guns and more likely to need liability insurance to protect themselves in case they hurt someone, either accidentally or in a fit of anger. I am angered that these people are willing to sacrifice the safety of their neighbors, fellow citizens and most importantly our children so they can increase their profit.

I ask that you use common sense and please, do not allow gun training in our schools. Additionally, please spend time improving our educational system and helping our children enter into the workplace with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed. These "tweaked" bills to increase gun usage in our state is unethical and a waste of people's time.

Respectfully,

Gloria Mattson  
8031 West Knightsbridge Dr.  
Mequon, WI 53097  
[Gmattson13@gmail.com](mailto:Gmattson13@gmail.com)  
262-305-5169

Wisconsin Assembly Education Committee

Derek Hoesly

8-3-17

Public Hearing: AB427

I'm against AB 427 allowing gun training in public high schools. The schools that currently have trap/skeet shooting teams believe that this bill is unnecessary and dangerous. In Wisconsin only 3,500 students take part in school-sanctioned shooting sports compared to the total number of public high school students over 259,000. Trap/skeet shooting teams don't use handguns yet this bill includes handguns. Children 17 and under can't legally possess a handgun in the state of Wisconsin. There are plenty of options across the state for students and families that want to get training for firearms. The gun lobby should have no role in deciding the high school curriculum. The bottom line is guns don't belong in Wisconsin high schools and this is just an attempt to sneak guns in.

Date: August 3, 2017

To: Assembly Education Committee Chair, Representative Thiesfeldt, Co-Chair, Representative Kitchens, and other committee members

From: Sally J. Drew

Re: Assembly Bill 427 relating to comprehensive firearm education for high school pupils

I am speaking against AB427 relating to comprehensive firearm education for high school pupils.

I do not believe that it is either desirable or necessary to promote or authorize teaching the use of firearms in Wisconsin high schools. Surely, this is a topic that is appropriately handled by the private sector. Various gun groups generally want government to stay out of issues surrounding ownership and use of guns. Why are they now asking the Departments of Public Instruction and Natural Resources to jointly develop a curriculum to be used in public schools?

This bill is not really about teaching gun safety. It is about teaching children how to shoot, and the purpose is to grow the shooting industry by promoting this activity to children at a young age. I am apposed to introducing any reasons for having guns in schools even if live ammunition is prohibited. The bill references different types and mechanics of firearms. How far might this go? Would the gun industry want to have a wide variety of arms available for demonstration? This bill could turn classrooms into firearm showrooms, complete with a captive audience.

Children under 18 cannot legally possess a handgun, but teaching them before that age will encourage them to obtain firearms when they are old enough. Handguns are not needed for trap/skeet shooting so this is a much broader agenda than just introducing shooting for sport. It is about the consideration of killing.

Please do not move forward with AB427.

Good morning. My name is Anneliese Dickman and I am the parent of a rising junior at Nicolet High School, as well as a rising 6<sup>th</sup> grader. I work for the Wisconsin Anti-Violence Effort and, previously to that, I was the research director of the Public Policy Forum, where my research focused on education policy.

Because you are the body in the Assembly charged with developing policy for our state's education system, I urge you to bear in mind the **purpose of public education** as you consider **AB 427**.

Public education's purpose is to develop students who are capable *producers*. Public education aims to graduate students who can produce ideas, goods, and services; people who will contribute *productively* to the fabric of society and to the economy.

This cynical proposal, on the other hand, is intended only to create *consumers*. The bill sponsors have been quoted in the media as stating that this legislation is needed to prop up a flagging industry—the shooting sports industry—by encouraging young people to become life-long firearms consumers. In fact, the National Shooting Sports Foundation estimates that someone who is recruited into the sport by age 16 will spend \$75,000 dollars over their lifetime on guns, ammo, and accessories.

I do not believe it is good public policy for our public education resources to be spent to save a dying industry. In accordance with their purpose, public education resources should be spent to develop the people who will create a thriving, *new* industry to replace that which is failing. **Nostalgia is not policy.**

If any extracurricular activity were to be given room in the academic curriculum and taught during the instructional day, why wouldn't it be a future-forward activity? I suggest robotics. Or flying drones. Or any of the many, many activities that teach leadership, problem solving, or critical thinking skills.

Many administrators from high schools with shooting teams have stated for the record that it is not necessary to devote classroom time to gun training. Several have gone even further and stated that guns do not belong in a classroom at all.

That is absolutely correct. **Guns do not belong in the classroom.** The classroom should be a place for context, collaboration, scholarship, and innovation.

Is there any person or entity in favor of this bill that does not somehow stand to profit from it? Our schools should not be treated as profit centers for *any* industry looking for a captive audience, but *especially not* when that industry benefits from fear, chaos, and the destruction of the social fabric—the antithesis of the goal of public education. Please reject this irresponsible bill.

Anneliese Dickman  
Bayside, WI



I became involved in the gun question about 10 years ago when researching neighborhood health issues. Every responsible study I have read since indicates that more guns means more deaths. This holds true for rural areas. The studies also show that sensible gun safety laws actually do work and save lives. I and experts would help you craft ones appropriate for Wisconsin.

The new brain research tells us that the parts of children's brains that govern impulse control are not fully developed until the mid-twenties. Kids see gun violence as something normal and o.k. on TV and in games. One boy said that he didn't realize guns hurt until he got shot.

Youngsters accidentally shoot someone almost every day. Remember that such an action destroys more than the life of the person hurt or killed but affects the child all family members.

I note the recent reports on school outcomes in Madison clearly indicate that additional resources could well be spent on such items as extra training for teachers . Some years ago I taught a course a MATC primarily to young men who wanted to go into media and the police force. They did not know the difference between the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. Surely more emphasis on educational basics is needed more than the "history, science, and mathematics of firearms."

I urge you to let children enjoy hunting and gun target shooting with their parents or other responsible adults, not learn how to do it on their own.

Dr. Peggy Wireman 4001 Monona Drive Monona, WI 53716  
(608) 221 4470

Statement in Opposition to Assembly Bill 427  
By Dr. Peggy Wireman

I own a gun. I shot a rifle at targets as a kid. I oppose this bill on the basis of unintended consequences.

1. It gives school sanctions to teenagers using guns and implies this choice for out-of-school recreation is the one preferred by teachers and authorities.
2. It opens the door to more legislation aimed at getting guns in schools.
3. It diverts attention and resources of the schools from other areas that need attention.
4. The only requirement for teaching the program is to have taken a course in firearms safety, which could be a short classroom lecture.

The unintended consequences would be to send the message that guns are cool, the school wants us to learn to shoot and puts kids in a classroom where they can meet other kids who know how to get a gun either from their home or the streets. The class could easily include students who have mental, emotional and anger management problems who should not be encouraged to learn to shoot.

While it is true that the courses would talk about gun safety, such teaching could easily be incorporated in other safety issues discussed with all students. Motor vehicle accidents are the first cause of death of teenagers. According to the Centers for Disease Control about 75 percent of high school seniors have drivers licenses. Yet Wisconsin schools do not all offer drivers training which reduces accidents. The second cause of death among teenagers is suicide, often with a firearm. I had a friend who had tried suicide several times unsuccessfully. Then she used a gun.

Statement in opposition to AB 427 before the Assembly Committee on  
Education— August 3,2017

My name is Earl Thayer of Madison, WI. I am a 95 year old Bronze Star veteran of 3 ½ years in WWII. I grew up as a gun owner and hunter (all the better to put food on our table in the Great Depression). At age 60 I removed guns from my life by giving them to a brother-in-law gun collector whose son unfortunately used one of them to kill himself. I am now chair of the Bethany United Methodist Church's gun safety group, and an active volunteer in the Coalition to Reduce Violence in Dane County.

I understand the Constitution of the U.S. I also understand what violence is doing to this country, to this state, and to this county. I know that guns are a disturbingly key element in what is another kind of war within this nation...a war against the circumstances that breed violence. My life experience tells me that we have too many guns, too available and for far too many they are now accepted as an easy means of settling disagreements, minor or major.

That experience tells me to oppose AB 427.

The very last thing we need to do in this war against violence is to educate our high school age children that intimate knowledge of guns is a creditable and state approved academic standard of learning. To masquerade this as an optional sport or hobby for our youth is offensive. It is in fact pimping for the gun industry which would love nothing better than to have schools legitimize their deadly product.

As citizens we should be outraged by the fear, the anxiety, and the horrors of death and injury caused by guns in America. Instead their daily frequency has inured us to guns and their culture and increasingly sanctioned their popularity as a personal accessory almost as important as our cell phone.

AB 427 would accelerate this "psychic numbness" instilling in our youth the idea that guns are a normal, acceptable and defining part of our common lives. It would create a false goal with promises of well-being that it could not keep. AB 427 should not become law.

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AB 427 Places an unnecessary burden on school boards and school districts regardless of the fact that participation is voluntary. We know that there will be an organized statewide effort to have school boards include this in their course offerings. The Superintendent of the Onalaska district has ~~st~~ stated that this will burden the schools with another unfunded mandate on a curriculum that is already full requiring the district to decide what to drop in order to make room.

There are plenty of opportunities to create, offer and publicize gun safety courses as an extracurricular and/or private, outside activity.

~~Regarding gun safety~~

Chuck Futwiler  
5 LUKKEN COURT  
MADISON, WI  
53704

[REDACTED]

From: Jennifer Mackinnon

"As a primary care physician at the Medical College of Wisconsin and our regional Level 1 Trauma Center of Froedtert Hospital, we are seeing not only the epidemic of opioid abuse but of gun violence. The numbers of deaths for both epidemics are both on the rise nationally and in our state of intentional, unintentional and suicides. The similarities are there. Both leave paths of destruction of the user of the opioid or the gun survive. The legislation called the HOPE Act in Wisconsin is helping to get people off opioids -

This is now what we need to do for Guns and their associated complications. The other day I had a patient picking bullet fragments from the side of his neck where a bullet just missed his carotid artery. He said he was in pain from this though it had been 6 months later and wanted "pain meds". I explained we would not give the types of pain meds he wanted. He was mad and I feared for my safety and my students' safety that I was teaching in that very exam room.

We need to promote conversations of NON violence and resolution in our schools NOT how to shoot or kill. If this is the message we are sending our most vulnerable population of our state, OUR CHILDREN, then we should be ashamed. We are not teaching peace but a world of violence and destruction. Please say NO to Assembly Bill 429."