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**Government Spending Bill Includes Heller-Backed Bills to Improve Background Check System, Strengthen School Safety**

*Fix NICS Act STOP and School Violence Act Included in Omnibus*

**WASHINGTON, DC** — U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) announced that the FY2018 omnibus spending measure includes two bipartisan measures that Heller helped introduce: the [Fix NICS Act](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=BB80E703-51FC-49C7-936D-D1845BAFE8C4) and the [Students, Teachers, and Officers Preventing (STOP) School Violence Act of 2018](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=E26AD292-AB4D-48DC-A005-8D93043C2963).

The Fix NICS Act would ensure federal and state authorities comply with existing law and accurately report relevant criminal history records to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS). The bill penalizes federal agencies that fail to properly report relevant records and incentivizes states to improve their overall reporting. The bill also directs more federal funding to the accurate reporting of domestic violence records.

The STOP School Violence Act funds school security improvements and invests in early intervention and prevention programs to stop school violence before it happens. Specifically, it authorizes the Department of Justice to make grants for the purposes of training students, school personnel, and law enforcement to identify signs of violence and intervene to prevent people from hurting themselves or others. In addition to prevention efforts, the legislation funds evidence-based technology and equipment to improve school security and prevent school violence. This includes the development of anonymous reporting systems, and commonsense security infrastructure improvements. The legislation also provides funds for school threat assessment and crisis intervention teams to help schools intake and triage threats before tragedy strikes.

“I’m pleased the omnibus includes two important, commonsense measures that I helped introduce to keep our communities – and schools - safe. The Fix NICS Act recognizes that for years criminal history records have not been properly reported to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, so it doubles down on states and raises the bar on federal agencies to improve overall reporting of criminal records,” **said Heller.** “Our legislation to stop school violence provides critical federal resources to implement early intervention programs, strengthen school security, and help train students, school personnel, and local law enforcement. I’m proud to have been a part of these strong, bipartisan efforts, and I look forward to seeing the President sign them into law.”

**Background on the Fix NICS Act:**

* Requires federal agencies and states to produce NICS implementation plans focused on uploading all information to the background check system showing that a person is prohibited from purchasing or possessing firearms under current law—including measures to verify the accuracy of records.
* Holds federal agencies accountable if they fail to upload relevant records to the background check system through public reporting and prohibiting bonus pay for political appointees.
* Rewards states who comply with their NICS implementation plans through federal grant preferences and incentives, while increasing accountability through public reporting for those who do not comply with their plans.
* Reauthorizes and improves important law enforcement programs to help state governments share relevant criminal record information with NICS.
* Creates a Domestic Abuse and Violence Prevention Initiative to ensure that states have adequate resources and incentives to share all relevant information with NICS showing that a felon or domestic abuser is excluded from purchasing firearms under current law.
* Provides important technical assistance to federal agencies and states who are working to comply with NICS record-sharing requirements.

         Both the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association and Secure Schools Alliance have expressed support for the bill.

 **Background on the STOP School Violence Act:**

       Reauthorizes and amends the 2001-2009 bipartisan Secure Our Schools Act to offer Department of Justice grants to states to help our schools implement proven, evidence-based programs and technologies that STOP school violence before it happens.

       The bill permits grants to fund evidence-based programs and practices to:

* Training to students, school personnel, and local law enforcement to identify and warning signs and intervene to stop school violence before it happens;
* Improve school security infrastructure to deter and respond to threats of school violence, including the development and implementation of anonymous reporting systems for threats of school violence;
* Develop and operate school threat assessment and crisis intervention teams; and
* Facilitate coordination between schools and local law enforcement.

       The bill would authorize $75 million for FY 2018, and $100 million annually for the next ten years, which may be partially offset from a DOJ research program called the Comprehensive School Safety Initiative.

       The legislation is endorsed by the National Rifle Association, National Shooting Sports Foundation, Fraternal Order of Police, National Sheriffs’ Association, National Network to End Domestic Violence, and National Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

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