



The Senate of Texas

CÉSAR J. BLANCO

TEXAS SENATOR
DISTRICT 29

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Texas Senate Passes School Safety Bill by Senator Blanco

Austin, Texas - Today, the Texas Senate passed Senate Bill 168 by Senator César J. Blanco (El Paso). Senate Bill 168 will ensure active shooter exercises are safely conducted and do not harm the mental health and well-being of students and teachers.

School shootings are tragic and traumatize our communities. In response, many schools have adopted active shooter drills or simulations to train and prepare students and teachers. However, there has been a lot of concern about the impact active shooter exercises might have on the mental and developmental well-being of students and teachers. Moreover, schools lack uniform guidance on requirements and best practices for active shooter exercises.

Evidence suggests that active shooter drills may be harmful to the mental health of students and school staff. According to a recent study, active shooter drills are associated with increases in depression (39 percent), stress and anxiety (42 percent), and physiological health problems (23 percent) for children as young as five years old up to high-schoolers, their parents, and teachers. S.B. 168 requires a school district to adopt best practices and policies regarding active shooter exercises.

Senator Blanco issued the following statement:

"If schools are going to conduct active shooter exercises, we need to ensure those exercises do more good than harm.

"My bill will require schools that choose to conduct active shooter exercises provide advance notice and use best practices so active shooter exercises don't traumatize school kids, teachers, and parents.