

## **Outline of Proposed Colorado School Safety and Youth in Crisis Legislation**

Presented to the 2015 SB 15-214 School Safety and Youth in Crisis Committee

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### Background:

SJR14-031 - Establishment of Safe Schools Month *(signed)*

SB14-164 - Aerial Firefighting Fleet Aircraft Acquisitions *(signed)*

SB13-138 - School Resource Officers in Public Schools *(signed)*

SB12-079 - Safe2Tell Program Revisions - School Safety *(signed)*

SB11-173 - Interoperable Communications in Schools *(signed)*

HB10-1054 - Higher Ed Safety Protocols Presentation *(signed)*

HB10-1136 - K-12 Schools Emergency Safety Drills

HB09-1009 - Require Public School Emergency Drills

SB08-181 - Coordinated Response to School Incidents *(signed)*

## **Countering Violent Extremism Act**

"Violent extremism" means ideologically motivated terrorist activities.

There is hereby created an Office for Countering Violent Extremism in [the Colorado Division of Homeland Security] of the Department of Public Safety. The head of the Office shall be the [Assistant Director] of Countering Violent Extremism, appointed by the Division Director. The Division may assign to or hire for the Office an individual with a background in technical matters, online media, offline media, or marketing.

Each appropriate state agency, including the Colorado Department of Education, shall appoint an individual to serve as liaison to the Office for Countering Violent Extremism.

The Office shall be responsible for:

- Coordinating the Department of Public Safety's efforts to counter violent extremism. Such efforts shall include:
  - Identifying risk factors that contribute to violent extremism in Colorado communities and schools, and identifying warning signals and potential remedies.
  - Identifying Colorado populations, including students, targeted by violent extremist propaganda, messaging, or recruitment.

- Managing the outreach and engagement efforts directed toward schools, students, and communities at risk for radicalization and recruitment for violent extremist activities.
- Ensuring relevant information, research, and products inform efforts to counter violent extremism.
- Developing and maintaining a strategy guiding policies and programs that address:
  - A counter-messaging program, including a plan to leverage new and existing Internet and other technologies and social media platforms to counter violent extremism, as well as the best practices and lessons learned from partners engaged in similar counter-messaging efforts.
  - Countering violent extremism-related engagement efforts.
  - The use of cooperative agreements with Federal, local, tribal, and other departments and agencies responsible for efforts relating to countering violent extremism.
  - Ensuring all activities related to countering violent extremism fully respect the privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties of all citizens of Colorado.
- Identifying and recommending new research and analysis requirements in coordination with the [appropriate agencies], and ensure the dissemination of information and methods for countering violent extremism practitioners, officials, law enforcement, and non-governmental partners to utilize such research and analysis.
- Assessing the methods used by violent extremists to disseminate propaganda and messaging to youth, adults, and communities at risk for radicalization and recruitment.
- Developing in coordination with the Colorado School Safety Resource Center and other appropriate agencies an emergency operations plan, including a statewide emergency communications plan, for state-level coordinated response within at-risk communities, including schools, to violent extremist attacks.
- Establishing a counter-messaging program to craft strategic counter-messages to violent extremist propaganda and messaging, exploring ways to use relevant Internet and other technologies and social media platforms, and maximizing other resources available to the Department.

- Serving as the primary representative of the Department in coordinating countering violent extremism efforts with Federal and State agencies and non-governmental organizations.
- Serving as the primary Department-level representative in coordinating with the appropriate agencies on national and international countering violent extremism issues.
- In coordination with the [appropriate agencies], providing guidance regarding the use of grants made to State agencies, and to local and tribal governments related to countering violent extremism.

The Office for Countering Violent Extremism shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with appropriate agencies outlining the roles of the Office and the agencies with respect to the administration of grants related to countering violent extremism.

The Assistant Director for Countering Violent Extremism shall submit to the Joint Budget Committee and to the members of the General Assembly an annual report for each of the next five fiscal years on the Office for Countering Violent Extremism. Each such report shall include the following:

- A description of the status of the programs and policies of the Department for countering violent extremism in Colorado, including the budget of the Department for countering violent extremism and the number of employees dedicated to or supporting countering violent extremism programs. Each such budget shall include an accounting of all funding amounts for all departmental programs, initiatives, and personnel related to countering violent extremism.
- A description of the efforts of the Office to cooperate with and provide assistance to other departments and agencies.
- Qualitative and quantitative metrics for evaluating the success of such programs and policies and the steps taken to evaluate the success of such programs and policies.
- A detailed summary of the organizations with which the Department conducted outreach to discuss countering violent extremism, an accounting of grants awarded by the Department to counter violent extremism, and an accounting of all training specifically aimed at countering violent extremism sponsored by the Department.
- Details of the optimal level of personnel and funding for the Office.

Out of funds made available to the Department of Public Safety, \$160,000 is authorized for the Office for Countering Violent Extremism for each of the next five fiscal years.

The General Assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

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**Reference:** H.R.2899, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to authorize the Office for Countering Violent Extremism. Introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Rep. Michael McCaul on June 25, 2015, and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security.

**About School Safety Partners:** The purpose of School Safety Partners is to promote national security, growth, and prosperity through a national School Safety Network, which shall make available to schools and communities men and women qualified for service and willing to serve, under conditions of crisis and hardship if necessary, to help the peoples of such schools and communities in meeting their needs for trained personnel, and to help promote a better understanding of school safety and community readiness on the part of the peoples served, and a better understanding of schools and communities on the part of those who serve.