



BOB BARR

Member of Congress, 1995 - 2003

February 16, 2018

The Honorable Donald Trump
President
United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

IN RE: Mass Shootings at Schools

Dear Mr. President:

I and all Americans join with you in condemning the evil visited upon the children, parents, and employees of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida just two days ago. I also share your resolve to do whatever we can to see that no child, parent of a school child, or employee of any school in America will have to suffer such horror in the future.

In this regard, Mr. President, I respectfully urge appointing a Blue Ribbon Commission, to study and report back to you and the American people meaningful and workable steps that can be taken to address what clearly is a deep-seated and multi-faceted societal problem; one that cannot be solved by simplistic proposals. As a conservative former United States Attorney and Member of Congress, I am not a fan of setting up commissions to deflect responsibility or to "kick a can down the road." There are, however, instances in our recent history in which such bodies have proved productive and meaningful (e.g., the 9-11 Commission), and in my view, this is such a matter.

The parameters for such a Commission should, of course, be proposed by you, with congressional action as necessary and as quickly as possible. Respectfully, parameters might include, among others:

- Membership limited to individuals who are not wedded to a predetermined outcome or political agenda, but rather
 - Individuals who are expert in a wide variety of backgrounds relevant to such a study, including, for example: education, law enforcement (not only federal), child psychiatry, entertainment, social media, and firearms.
- A clear mandate to go wherever the evidence leads; in other words,
 - No areas of inquiry are off the table (but do not be drawn into specifics), and with responsibilities broader than any single department or agency, such as the Department of Justice.
- A short time frame within which to report back to you, the Congress, and the American people (no longer than one year); with a mandate to issue a
 - Public report, based on open hearings and meetings (with closed sessions only in very limited and essential circumstances); and
 - With subpoena power and sufficient resources to get the job done.

While there certainly are specific measures that can and should be taken in the short term, and on which I am confident you are already working, I believe firmly that the appointment of a commission as noted above, will prove extremely valuable and lead to workable solutions to this vexing problem.

If I might be of assistance in this or any other regard, Mr. President, please do not hesitate to call on me.

Very truly yours

Bob Barr

Member of Congress, 1995 – 2003

United States Attorney, N.D. GA, 1986-1990