



# ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

SHERIFF-CORONER DON BARNES

OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

August 19, 2019

The Honorable Brian Babin, D.D.S.  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2236 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**RE: SUPPORT – H.R. 838, the Threat Assessment, Prevention and Safety Act**

Dear Congressman Babin:

I am writing to advise you of my support for your House Resolution 838, the Threat Assessment, Prevention and Safety (TAPS) Act. This legislation is critical to ensuring the right strategies are in place as local, state and federal law enforcement work to stop targeted violence and mass casualty events.

In Orange County, California we have utilized the strategies promoted in this legislation for several years. Our School Mobile Assessment and Resource Team, commonly known as SMART, was created in 2001. SMART works in conjunction with school officials, the Probation Department, the District Attorney's Office, and mental health agencies to help resolve safety issues and concerns on school campuses. The goal of SMART is to evaluate and assess each incident individually, and effectively resolve the matter through the least intrusive means available while still maintaining safety and security to the school. In a recent two year period the SMART team responded to 469 calls for service, resulting in 173 arrests and seizure of more than 183 weapons.

The success of SMART demonstrates how utilizing the proper assessment strategies can help keep threats from materializing into acts of violence. The opportunity HR 838 provides to further develop our local strategies, provide training and expand the national network utilizing threat assessments tools will greatly enhance the safety of all Americans.

As our nation copes with the recent events in El Paso and Dayton, many are looking for answers and solutions that will bring these tragedies to an end. While there is no easy answer, we do know what tools will put us on the path to success. HR 838 will give local communities those proven tools needed to save lives and keep our neighborhoods safe.

Thank you for your efforts in creating this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Don Barnes".

Don Barnes  
Sheriff-Coroner

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