

Good Morning. My name is Elyza Bird, and I'm a senior at Fair Haven Union High School.

I have been looking forward to my senior year since my first day of school as a freshman. I started this school year filled with excitement. Excitement for prom, our senior trip, and graduation.

However I soon realized that this year would not be filled with great memories, but instead the fear of walking into school every day.

I find myself driving to school in the morning replaying the last thing I said to my parents in case that was the last time I see them. I find myself looking over my shoulder in the hallways, and staring out the window at the parking lot to find something out of place.

I am now living with the fear of losing my friends, my teachers, and many people that really mean a lot to me. I don't believe that any person should have to endure what we have.

Because of the support and protection that that our representatives have failed to provide us with, I am no longer excited for the final months of my senior year.

I am not excited to go to prom. Instead I will be watching the exits and hoping that I make it home. I am no longer excited for graduation, because even with a heavy police presence I now have anxiety in crowds.

I ask you, Since when, do we allow threats to be made against police officers with no punishment. Since when, do we allow threats to be made against upwards of 400 people in a SCHOOL with no punishment.

You may not classify this situation as an attempt, but many people including myself do not agree. Are you really prepared to wait for bullets to fly and people to lose their lives before you see that this is an issue that needs to be addressed. This was a threat, and this was an attempt.

You have failed us. You are supposed to be our support system, our protection, and you have failed us.

I understand that this may be difficult for you to picture. It seems distant, unbelievable even. It could have happened to anyone. But it didn't, it happened to US, and it is YOUR job to protect and support us.

I want to be able to graduate in 2 months knowing that the classes that follow me and the teachers that stay behind are safe.

I want to know that no student will ever have to experience this pain and fear because it has utterly ruined my senior year.

I want to know that this will never happen again, and we deserve to be assured that it won't.

Honestly I can't believe that I am here right now. I never could have imagined that there would even be a debate over the safety of students.

If you have to think twice about keeping students safe and protected, if you have to think twice about changing this law and making sure that this never happens again, then I'm sorry to tell you that you have chosen the wrong profession.

I should not have to tell you how important it is to protect and support us, you should already know it and it is completely absurd that I am even here right now.

Make the change, be the voice. This is something that never should have happened in the first place and it needs to never happen again, and it is your job to make sure of that.

Thank you.