



## Input on HB 3

Regarding armed security officers

March 27, 2023

The **Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)** offers the following neutral input on **HB 3** by Rep. Burrows, which would require at least one armed security officer on each school campus.

School safety is one of ATPE's top legislative priorities. ATPE's 2022-23 Legislative Program, which was unanimously adopted by members of the 2022 House of Delegates, states the following:

**“ATPE supports measures to ensure all educational settings are safe and secure environments where students, school employees, and volunteers can be productive.”**

HB 3 would allow a district to satisfy this requirement with either a school district peace officer, a school resource officer, a commissioned peace officer employed as security personnel, a school marshal, or an armed school employee.

ATPE believes the decision to permit certain employees to carry a handgun is best decided by local school districts. The commitment to carry a deadly weapon for security purposes must be voluntarily entered into by each individual employee with full knowledge of their responsibilities and without undue pressure from administrators. In order to guard against undue pressure, ATPE suggests adding the following language to Sec. 37.0814:

**(c) A school district may not compel a school district employee to serve as an armed security officer in order to satisfy the requirements under this section.**

We believe this change would facilitate the objective of Section 4 of HB 3 while safeguarding against a school employee being directed to serve as an armed security officer in order to comply with this section.

Nothing is more important than the safety of Texas children. HB 3 is an important step in that direction and ATPE appreciates the opportunity to work with the Texas Legislature to make schools safer for students and staff. **We respectfully ask your consideration of this recommendation**, which we believe will make the bill stronger and more efficacious. For additional information, contact ATPE Governmental Relations at (800) 777-2873 or [government@atpe.org](mailto:government@atpe.org).

*The Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE) has been a strong voice for Texas educators since 1980. It is the leading educators' association in Texas with approximately 90,000 members statewide. With its strong collaborative philosophy, ATPE speaks for classroom teachers, administrators, future, retired and para-educators and works to create better opportunities for 5 million public schoolchildren. ATPE is the ally and the voice of Texas public school educators.*