

Van H. Wanggaard

Wisconsin State Senator

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 449

Senate Bill 449 updates Wisconsin's school safety laws to make sure the best and most up-to-date information is available to first responders if the need arises.

Under current law, each school must have a school safety plan, complete with blueprints on file with local law enforcement agencies and the Office of School Safety in the Department of Justice.

Unfortunately, blueprints are a picture from a moment of time. As you know, when school needs change, the school building changes. Walls may be erected and doors may be moved. HVAC or plumbing may need to be rejiggered to accommodate additional needs. As a result, blueprints of a school quickly go out-of-date. In addition, blueprints are often physical documents that are inaccessible when needed quickly. At a time when seconds matter, police and/or school officials must evaluate the blueprints and correct them.

Imagine a law enforcement officer working to clear a building. Right now, a commanding officer would have to communicate with officers and find school staff in the building, probably via radio, while looking at paper blueprints - hoping they are accurate - to direct people which way to go. It's a time-consuming process. But there is a better way.

Senate Bill 449 authorizes the use of "Critical Incident Mapping," or CIMs, for school safety grants in addition to blueprints. There will be experts here later to testify in great detail about CIMs, but let me give you a quick overview. CIMs are interactive up-to-date schematics of a building. It can be used on a phone or a tablet, and it can be used and updated by multiple people at the same time. This access to real-time information can be used to secure or evacuate children, clear buildings, and identify the location of a threat quickly, making students, teachers, and law enforcement more safe.

In the state budget, we set aside \$2 million in the JFC supplemental appropriation to allow school districts to utilize CIMs in their school safety plan. This bill authorizes the use of that money. In short, SB 449 updates Wisconsin's school safety law to ensure that the best tools are available to keep our students and teachers safe, and it deserves our support.

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE

JESSE JAMES

September 16, 2021

Representative Jesse James' Testimony in Support of SB 449:

Thank you Chairman and other committee members for holding this hearing. I'd also like to say thank you to Senator Wanggaard for joining me in authoring this bill.

This bill involves two of my passion areas: law enforcement/public safety and kids. I'm also a fan of common sense legislation, and this proposal is just that. The critical incident mapping grant program would assist school districts and law enforcement during high pressure incidents. This grant would provide all involved first responders and district officials a vital tool to quickly coordinate an emergency response in our schools and communities during situations such as an active shooter or a natural disaster.

Unfortunately, emergencies such as active shooter situations in schools have been a growing concern across the nation and here in Wisconsin, and there are often times where there is a lack of resources, like physical maps of the building in which the incident is occurring.

School blueprints are either unusable or inaccessible to first responders during an emergency. The blueprints are not always standardized, accurate, or labeled to reflect the layout of the facility, making them difficult to communicate or orient with. Additionally, they are not compatible with public safety systems that allow first responders access to maps during a crisis. Most schools in Wisconsin do not currently have access to resources at this high a level. That's where this grant program comes in.

Having an accessible, streamlined critical incident map available for all first responder's means they can clear a building, neutralize any active shooters, and treat casualties quickly and safely. This would ensure that all parties involved, both first responders and school officials, can communicate and act based off the same language and blueprints, mitigating communication issues. Working together is critical in any emergency response, and that's why we want to have law enforcement and school districts involved in the application process for this grant funding. Communication and comradery is key, especially when it comes to keeping our children, educators, and first responders safe.

It is our responsibility to act in the best interest of all Wisconsinites. This bill would benefit communities statewide and help improve our public safety infrastructure. I ask that the members of this committee support SB 449 and protect those we serve. Thank you.



CRITICAL RESPONSE GROUP
America's Common Operating Picture™

September 16, 2021

To: Chairman Wanggaard and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety

From: Joe Hanson, Regional Director, Critical Response Group

Re: Support for Critical Incident Mapping Program

Chairman Wanggaard and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety, thank you for your willingness to hold a hearing on Senate Bill 449, relating to grants to schools to provide critical incident mapping.

Chairman Wanggaard, I would also like to thank you for your leadership on this issue. It has been an honor to meet with you, and the other lead authors Senator Taylor and Representatives James, Loudonbeck and Vruwink, to discuss ways to make Wisconsin schools safer.

For background, in 2019, I left active duty as a Marine Raider and Special Operations Officer in Marine Special Operations Command. I served as the ground force commander for hundreds of combat operations in Afghanistan and elsewhere. After leaving active duty, I was excited to join Critical Response Group and move back to my home state of Wisconsin.

Critical Response Group was started with the goal of improving the national state of emergency preparation and response. Our company's founders, also Special Operations veterans, saw during their time in the Global War on Terrorism that collaboration, interoperability, and information-sharing between all branches of the military, intelligence agencies, and coalition partners was vital to the success of a mission.

These efforts lead to the development, validation, and adoption of a communication technique called the Gridded Reference Graphic (GRG). The GRG is a visual communication tool that combines a gridded overlay with high-resolution overhead

imagery enabling all mission participants to communicate off of a sheet of paper about unfamiliar locations.

Coming home, they realized that the concept would increase the safety of their children's schools by enabling collaboration between first responders during emergencies at unfamiliar locations like schools. That is why CRG assists schools, government buildings and businesses throughout the country. For example, in New Jersey, over 70% of schools already use critical incident mapping.

Here in Wisconsin, we have already partnered with many businesses, including most waterparks in the Wisconsin Dells, the Milwaukee Brewers, Molson-Coors, SC Johnson amongst others. Additionally, we have already assisted school districts by mapping over 350 schools to support first-responder's response time.

In the handouts provided you will find an example of our mapping for schools. The maps are universal for locations and are predicated on accurate overhead imagery with a grid overlay, creating what amount to a simple game of "battleship". Letters run across the top of the map, numbers down the left hand side, and north is always up. Each floor receives a map and all common language is labeled on the map for ease of communications. Easy to read, accurate, and accessible maps are the base for all movement and communication during a response to a critical incident at a school. This is the most essential tool during an emergency, and without it we have no common language to communicate about location.

Our partnership and success could not be done without the support of law enforcement. Having both law enforcement and schools working together is a successful formula in assuring that our schools, our children, and our communities are safer.

In closing, I am excited to support Senate Bill 449. As someone who has worked with school leaders and law enforcement to map hundreds of schools across Wisconsin and our country, I know firsthand how valuable and necessary this tool is. I know that this legislation will make our schools safer.

I respectfully ask you for your support in passing Senate Bill 449.

I am now available for any questions.



September 16, 2021

To: Chairman Wanggaard and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety

From: Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association
Michael Steffes, 3rd Vice President

Re: Support for Critical Incident Mapping Program

Chairman Wanggaard and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety, thank you for holding a hearing on Senate Bill 449, relating to grants to schools to provide critical incident mapping.

We would also like to thank Chairman Wanggaard for your leadership on this issue, and your continued dialogue with law enforcement on how to make our communities safer. Additionally, we would like to thank the other lead authors Senator Taylor and Representatives James, Loudenbeck and Vruwink for their time and support on this issue.

The Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association is proud to support Senate Bill 449. This funding will help our departments better support our school districts and respond to emergencies in a more efficient and timely manner.

When arriving to any stressful and urgent incident, having a better understanding of the layout, entrances, and exits of the building is crucial. With critical incident mapping, we are further benefited by all responders operating off the same map of a potentially unknown location.

In many situations, multiple departments respond to the same incident. With critical incident mapping being done and given to various departments, each mutual aid partner can jointly respond more effectively when arriving to an active scene. With schools having many alterations and additions done through the years, updated maps help ensure more awareness for each of our responding officers.

In closing, the Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association is excited to support Senate Bill 449. Our departments throughout Wisconsin, in communities big and small, will benefit

from having this resource made available to them. This in turn will make our communities and schools safer for our children and families.

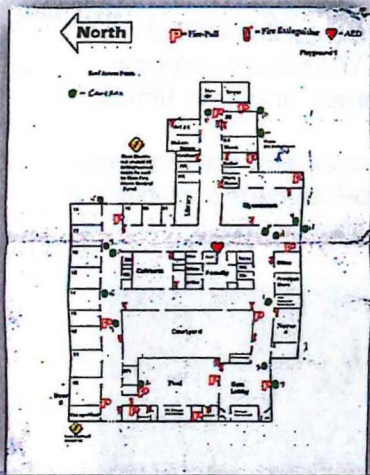
We respectfully ask you to support Senate Bill 449.

We are now available for any questions from the committee.



Collaborative Response Graphics

Site-Specific Common Operating Pictures for Wisconsin Schools



The Problem:

School floor plans are unusable and inaccessible to first responders during an emergency.

- Not standardized, accurate, or labeled to reflect the nomenclature of the facility, making them difficult to communicate or orient with.

Not compatible with public safety systems that allow

- municipal, county, and state first responders access to maps during a crisis.

The Solution: Collaborative Response Graphics (CRGs)



CRGs standardize school maps by combining accurate facility floor plans with overhead imagery and a gridded overlay. They are easily stored and accessed in any public safety system to improve response and communication during an emergency.

Why CRGs?

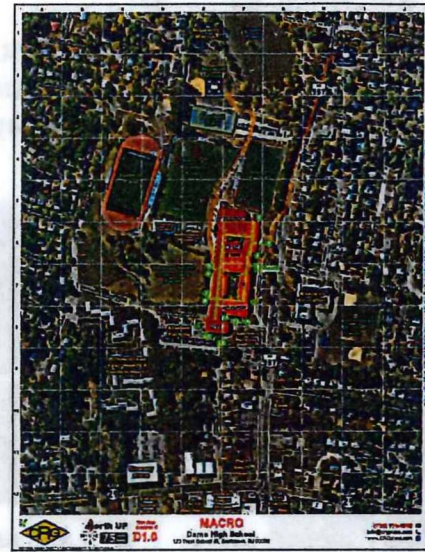
The State of Wisconsin has been proactive in measures to make our schools safer. 2017 Act 143 created the Office of School Safety and invested \$100 million in school safety initiatives. Additionally, Act 143 asked for all school districts to submit blueprints to the Office of School Safety, with many districts not fully complying.

For the majority of the schools in the state, however, school floor plans remain inaccessible to first responders during an emergency. They also do not reflect the current labeling of the school and lack critical information first responders need to know, like door numbers, hallway names, and key utilities.

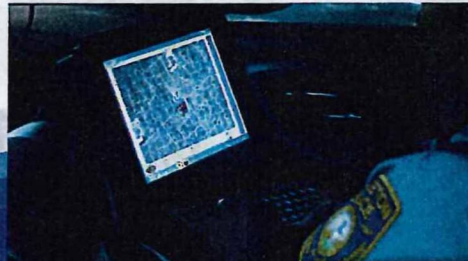
CRGs solve this problem by providing a first responders with a simple communication and collaboration tool - accessible and useable under stress - to coordinate emergency response both outside and inside a building. CRGs enhance response time and improve command and control during an incident.



Each floor of a building gets a "Micro" CRG to coordinate response inside a building.



Each campus gets a "MACRO" CRG to coordinate outside of a building.



How it's used

Critical Response Group ensures approved first responders have access to current CRGs of your site every year, including the 911-Emergency Center and the SWAT unit that provide coverage of your area. We customize our integration to each specific agency to ensure the maps are accessible as possible.

About the Team

Our founders are a mix of decorated and combat-tested U.S. Military Special Operations veterans and senior law enforcement executives, which gives us a unique perspective on building and implementing Common Operating Pictures for domestic first responders. We are fully committed to introducing a solution that is not based on theory, but instead is mission proven.