

If you don't regularly receive my reports, request a free subscription at [steve\\_bakke@comcast.net](mailto:steve_bakke@comcast.net) !  
Follow me on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/@BakkeSteve> and receive links to my posts and more!  
Visit my website at <http://www.myslantonthings.com> !

## **Trash the feel-good solutions! There's work to be done!**

Steve Bakke  May 29, 2022



On May 24<sup>th</sup>, an 18-year-old shooter murdered 19 elementary students and two teachers at Robb Elementary in Uvalde, Texas. I think the collective shock is far worse than from Columbine, Sandy Hook, Parkland, and all those others. It's about time that mourning leads to meaningful action.

I'm neither a gun enthusiast nor a frantic gun control activist. I own no firearms. My opinion on gun control has always centered around the Second Amendment words, "well regulated," used to describe individuals' right to bear arms. Embedded in that declaration is a presumption of order and competence, achieved through reasonable and effective rules, regulations, and limited controls. I've often expressed my opinion that some level of gun control is consistent with the Founders' intention.

We must stop the futile screaming for immediate answers. Stop trying to pass legislation before the dead are buried. Stop insisting that any solution is all about gun control legislation. Stop the immediate finger-pointing and blame. Stop producing the unhelpful feel-good solutions of the past.

We can't afford to simply pass another gun control law without a careful analysis of our current procedures. What works? What doesn't work? What would work but isn't being performed or enforced? Those questions are an important start – but only a start.

What are the characteristics of various forms of gun violence? We can't contend a suicide should be dealt with as we would an armed robbery, urban violence, or domestic violence. Consider a mass shooting in a shopping mall by a disgruntled employee. Can this be addressed in the same way as we would a mass school shooting? A simple example is to profile school mass killings. Are there common perpetrator characteristics? It seems clear that the shooters are "typically young males."

Start with traditional theories about gun control and mental health. Then add information gathered as described above, and we've made progress. But there are many more questions we should be asking, many of which won't be politically correct by today's sometimes controversial standards: Are changes in family structure or faith-based activities worthy of investigation? Are internet habits, including violent video games a factor? What is the effect of institutionalized "urban poverty plantations"? Can technical and safety training programs make a difference?

Has there been a decline in moral absolutes with morality becoming a personal choice? If so, is that a factor? Are law enforcement trends contributing to the problem? What effect do gun free zones have on gun violence? Has there been a relevant change in the sanctity and value of human life? Are dysfunctional lifestyles part of the apparently damaged developmental process in some young people? Is personal accountability declining in our society? And potentially a big factor is the emotional impact of all that has happened during the pandemic?

Within two days after the Uvalde tragedy, the U.S. Senate democrats declared an immediate vote on a domestic terrorism bill and a new gun control/registration bill. The republican opposition brought charges from democrats that republicans oppose legislation that would reduce gun tragedies. The reason for the opposition was that the bills were either giving too little attention to radical leftist terrorism while focusing primarily on white supremacists, or were advancing legislation without study and debate.

At the same time, the democrat majority leader proudly refused to advance republican legislation to initiate “best practices” for “hardening” school security. Democrats contend it won’t work. They use the Uvalde tragedy as evidence of likely failure. It’s clear the parties can’t work together effectively on this project so we must keep them out of the hard work necessary to begin working toward improvement.

I did a search to determine if non-political experts have gun violence research available for study and evaluation by the Congress. Yes, it’s available. Unfortunately, one researcher pointed out that his experience has been that for our politicians it’s either all about gun control or mental health, but not both, nor anything else. I’d like to add “hardening school security” to that list of solutions that must be considered.

If we don’t change our approach to dealing with gun violence, we’ll have more tragically unsuccessful “let’s feel good quick” solutions. We must come together on this huge, complex, all-important project.

---

**A personal note:** Emporia State University is the home of the National Memorial to Fallen Educators. This is a permanent tribute to those educators who lost their lives in the line of duty and is part of the official National Teacher Hall of Fame. It’s a reminder that school shootings haven’t just been happening during the last few years. The names of k-12 educators who literally “gave their all” are inscribed on a permanent monument. Check out their website: <https://nthfmemorial.org/>.

One of those memorialized there, Forrest L. Willey, my uncle and baptism sponsor, lost his life in a 1966 shooting at the school where he served as Secondary Education Coordinator. Read his story at [this link](#) which will take you to my website, and [here](#) within the Memorial’s website. Attending the dedication of this Memorial in 2014 was a memorable and important day in my life.