

# Newsflash: Teachers Are Already Armed

In the wake of yet another mass shooting in a public school, a host of familiar recommendations have resurfaced about how to “prevent this from ever happening again.” Predictably, both conservatives and liberals are looking to the government for a solution. Americans have somehow arrived at a point where they cannot conceive of human action that is not either prohibited, mandated, or, at the very least, centrally planned.

## Just Like Drugs

The first problem is the goal. It is absurdly unrealistic to believe any set of rules is going to prevent anything from “ever happening again.” If you doubt that, I invite you to examine the war on drugs. Many decades ago, politicians decided American citizens taking heroin was never going to happen again. They banned that drug completely. You aren’t allowed to possess or sell it under any circumstances. Not after a background check. Not with a doctor’s prescription. Not at all.

Today, that drug is at the center of what the same government calls an opioid “epidemic.” *Epidemic*. So much for heroin overdoses “never happening again.”

Yet, despite this evidence, liberals still suggest what they’ve always suggested: further restrictions on gun ownership. A good portion of them believes that only government employees charged with national defense or public safety should be allowed to carry guns. Ban them completely for the civilian population, they say, and mass shooters won’t be able to obtain them.

You know, just like drugs.

# Arm and Train?

The conservative answer to liberal prohibition (oxymoron?) is to “arm and train the teachers.” While no one has come out and suggested mandating teachers carry firearms or be trained in using them, every suggestion seems to suggest “we” (i.e., the government) need to do the arming and training.

Here’s a little newsflash for both sides: the teachers are already armed.

No, not every teacher carries firearms and perhaps not as high a percentage of teachers do so as the percentage of the general population that carries. But there are over [three million](#) teachers in public schools and some percentage of them have concealed carry permits. It would be unlikely that there aren’t at least some members of every faculty in America that have a concealed carry permit.

It’s not a matter of arming teachers, but rather to cease disarming them when they report to work.

To the extent conservatives acknowledge this option at all, they seem trapped in the same box as liberals in feeling the need to point out there are teachers who are also retired military, in the reserves, or former law enforcement officers. That’s probably true. But there are also tens of millions of Americans, and likely tens of thousands of teachers, who both own firearms and never served in the military or police.

An armed civilian population constitutes that “well-regulated militia” the 2nd Amendment refers to. What makes a militia a militia is the members not being part of the regular army.

## Four Little Words

I’ve often said the greatest danger to liberty is not a foreign army, terrorists, or even a homegrown tyrant. It is

four little words. And they aren't, "Up against the wall!" That comes later.

They are, "Something must be done."

Instead of the government "doing something" about mass shootings, it should stop doing something. It should stop prohibiting teachers from carrying into school the same firearms they are licensed and trusted to carry in most other places. It is the path of least resistance to providing realistic protection for schoolchildren. It requires no one to do anything they aren't already doing.

No, this will not ensure that mass shootings "never happen again." Nothing will. And not every teacher with a firearm, confronted with the pressure of an active shooter situation, will calmly dispatch the shooter. But as we [saw](#) in Parkland, FL, neither will every trained police officer.

## The Failures of Government

Broward County Sheriff's deputy Scot Peterson was assigned to the school as a resource officer and was on the school grounds during the entire incident. He heard the shooting inside the school, but videos show he remained outside for four minutes during the six-minute mass shooting, which claimed seventeen lives.

Peterson wasn't alone. Three other armed law enforcement officers were on the scene and [failed](#) to enter the school before backup arrived.

This wasn't the only government failure in this case. Local police had been called to Nikolas Cruz's home thirty-nine times over the past seven years, according to documents [obtained](#) by CNN. Members of the family he lived with after his mother's death report he routinely introduced himself as "a school shooter."

It wasn't just local police who dropped the ball on Cruz. The FBI was warned multiple times about Cruz, including by "an unidentified woman close to Cruz" who [called](#) the FBI a month before the incident, warning of her fears he would "get into a school and just shoot the place up." The FBI was also called in September 2017 by a video blogger who said a user named "nikolas cruz" had posted a comment on one of his videos, saying, "I'm going to be a professional school shooter."

Hopefully, this will inspire more than mere outrage at government incompetence. Americans should take a long, hard look at how much of what should be personal and private they have allowed government to become involved in and how badly it has failed them. And if government can't run education or health care, it certainly shouldn't be trusted with something as important as the defense of one's own life.

## Let's Try Freedom

Thomas Paine began his [pamphlet](#), *Common Sense*, widely credited with convincing a critical mass of colonists to support American independence, by making a crucial distinction:

"SOME writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins." He went on to say, "Society in every state is a blessing, but Government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one."

It's time Americans remembered the miracles possible within that blessing called society and the limitations of an institution based on nothing more than consolidated brute force. Mass shootings are horrible situations under any circumstances, but they may be rendered less horrible if the victims have options other than to call the government and wait.

States that haven't already should repeal any laws necessary to give the right and the responsibility for self-defense back to teachers and other school employees. Allowing them the option to carry firearms will both act as a deterrent to future shooters and give teachers a reasonable chance to defend their students and themselves the next time the need arises.

The government has had its chance. It has failed. It's time to try a little freedom.

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Tom Mullen is the author of [Where Do Conservatives and Liberals Come From? And What Ever Happened to Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness?](#) and [A Return to Common Sense: Reawakening Liberty in the Inhabitants of America](#). For more information and more of Tom's writing, visit [www.tommullen.net](http://www.tommullen.net).

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