

REMARKS

OF

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PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL
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AT THE

HILLSBOROUGH HIGH SCHOOL PRESS EVENT TO
ANNOUNCE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE SCHOOL SAFETY GRANTS TO
FLORIDA

ON

MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2019
TAMPA, FL

Thank you. It's wonderful to be here in Tampa. I want to thank Superintendent Eakins, Principal Brady and one of your amazing students, Anthony Allen, for allowing me to join them today at this beautiful school. I would also like to thank Chief Dugan for being with us this afternoon, and for the exceptional job he and his officers do to protect the people of this great city.

I bring greetings from our Attorney General, Bill Barr, who sends his congratulations, and his thanks, to the administrators, teachers and staff who power the future of Hillsborough High students. He is so grateful—we are *all* so grateful—for the guidance and inspiration you give to the kids in your charge. He also sends his deep appreciation to the dedicated law enforcement officers who protect Tampa's communities and serve the city's youth. And, of course, the Attorney General speaks for all of us in expressing his admiration for the amazing students of Hillsborough High. These young people are so remarkable the way they stand up to the many challenges they face every day, the prospect of violence in their schools not the least of them.

Let me also extend my thanks to the outstanding U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Florida, Maria Chapa Lopez, and to an exceptional First Assistant U.S. Attorney from her office, Karin Hoppmann. U.S. Attorney Chapa Lopez and Ms. Hoppmann do an outstanding job looking out for the people of central Florida, and we are grateful for all they do to protect the communities of their district.

It is my privilege to be here today, on behalf of the Attorney General, to announce substantial investments in the safety of Hillsborough's communities, and especially, in the safety of the county's schools. Earlier today, I had the privilege of joining Tampa Mayor Castor, Chief Dugan and Pam Iorio, the President and CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, which of course is headquartered here in Tampa. Together, we announced more than \$27 million in grants to support students and youth in Florida. I am here now, at beautiful Hillsborough High School—Go Big Red!—to announce that \$6.4 million of that \$27 million will help school districts and law enforcement agencies across the state protect students from the all-too-real threat of school violence.

Last year, President Trump signed the STOP School Violence Act into law because he believes that children should be allowed to learn and grow, free of fear and violence. I am very pleased that \$1.2 million in STOP grants will go to Hillsborough County. These funds will strengthen threat assessments, better prepare first responders and help students and faculty report tips and leads that can prevent shootings and other acts of school violence.

They also represent part of a nationwide commitment from this Administration to the safety of America's schools. In conjunction with today's announcement at Hillsborough High, the Department of Justice is awarding more than \$85 million in STOP grants to jurisdictions and school districts throughout the nation. These awards will help law enforcement and school officials across the country secure their schools and keep violence out of the classrooms and hallways.

We are proud to make this funding available to the great public safety and community service professionals in Hillsborough County and throughout Florida. And we're just as proud that more funding opportunities will be made available in fiscal year 2020. The Justice Department's three grant-making agencies—the Office of Justice Programs, the COPS Office and the Office on Violence Against Women—are working on new grant solicitations, which we will be posting on the grants.gov website over the coming months.

Although we are so pleased to make these resources available, we don't pretend that federal funding alone will make Florida's kids and communities safer. That job falls to the brave men and women who enforce the law, and it falls to the dedicated education professionals who instruct, guide and protect our young people. No one understands this better than Attorney General Barr, and no one is as focused on giving our state and local professionals the tools they need to do their critical jobs.

I am so grateful to them—to all of *you*—and to everyone who works so hard on behalf of the people of Hillsborough County and all the citizens of Florida. We are proud to be your partners.

Thank you all.

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