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# Gov. Ivey Hosts Round Table For Improving School Safety

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Safer schools were once again up for discussion at the state capitol Tuesday, but this time federal officials were involved. Governor Kay Ivey hosted a listening session for the Federal Commission on School Safety.

It was the fourth and final listening session by the group formed by President Donald Trump after the deadly shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Seventeen people were killed.

The round table allowed state and local agencies to give their input on how to improve school safety. Representatives from Georgia, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina and Texas, were all apart of the session though much of the discussion, governor Kay Ivey says, has been had before.

“I think we’ve got more specific ideas on the ground and that people can achieve” said Ivey “I heard everybody wants to communicate and everybody wants to talk students and all of that is well and good but you’ve got to take some ‘pro-action’ “.

Many representatives expressed the need for more mental health initiatives and professionals within schools though no solid proposals were announced.

Ivey pointed out some of the initiatives that her office has recently rolled out. Her (SAFE) council appointed in May, has made 10 recommendations, for safer schools. One of them, the Alabama Sentry Program which will permit administrators in schools, without a school resource officer , to keep a firearm on campus, to respond to an active shooter situation. though, one Alabama lawmaker (Rep. Chris England, D-Tuscaloosa) , calls governor Ivey’s use of an executive memo to implement the law, unconstitutional.

Outside of the Sentry Program, one question posed by Senator Del Marsh, was how the state plans to fund some of the other slated school safety measures.

According to the Federal comission on School safety, there are a number of grants and federal funds available for improving school safety.

“I think this Summer we’ve applied for three of these DOJ grants” said Alabama education superintendent Eric Mackey ” I’m hoping that some of that money comes to Alabama”.

The Federal Commission for school safety has been researching 27 specific issues related to school safety, and will be delivering a report at the end of the year. That report will also include a number of grants that are available for improving school safety, which Governor Ivey says she looks forward to exploring.

Following the two-hour session, members of the general public were able to express their views on how to improve school safety. Listening sessions were held earlier in Kentucky, Washington D.C. and Wyoming.

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