



April 30, 2026

Dear Gov. Walz and Legislative Leaders:

Peace be with you.

Thank you for your service to the people of Minnesota during a very difficult year in our state. I realize that your work comes with great personal sacrifice that is often overlooked by both citizens and casual observers of politics yet is nonetheless very real.

This session has appropriately been shaped by the need for a legislative response to the tragedy at Annunciation School. Various solutions have been proposed, yet political divisions have emerged impeding the opportunity for legislation to be enacted. My hope is that you can come together in these last weeks and transcend the historical ideological divisions around matters such as guns and school safety. We need to make our children and our communities safer this year; we should not cynically wait for a future election in the chance that one's preferred legislative proposals might triumph. There is no one bill or one party that has all the answers to gun violence prevention and we need to come together now to bring the best ideas to the table.

From the beginning of the session, and recognizing the difficult politics of this issue, my brother bishops of the Minnesota Catholic Conference have proposed a three-part, "all-of-the-above" approach to offer better protection to kids in Minnesota schools:

- 1) a ban on high-capacity ammunition magazines (H.F. 3402/S.F. 3714);
- 2) an increase in the school safety student funding levy rate and the program's expansion to tribal, charter, and nonpublic school students (H.F. 3493/S.F. 5111); and
- 3) a bill to require parents to opt their children under 16 into social media platforms and protect them from addictive features (H.F. 4138/S.F. 4696).

We recognize that no law on its own will fully address the problem of gun violence in our schools, but research shows a multi-pronged approach with the right remedies can make an incremental difference. While the totality of these proposals might require each party to give something up, the sacrifice is justifiable because of what would be gained in exchange.

We are encouraged that one of the proposals has already been proven to bring people together. The **Stop the Harms from Addictive Social Media** bill has, with bipartisan support, reached the General Register in both houses. This important bill, fostering dialogue between parents and kids about social media use, could be a watershed moment in our state for how we protect kids from

being enslaved to the algorithm and to so many of the problems that come with it. At minimum, we urge you to enact this bill as soon as possible.

There are other common-sense gun violence prevention measures that we believe could pass with bipartisan support this year as well, including:

1. H.F. 3407/S.F. 3661 Prohibiting the sale of “ghost” guns; and
2. H.F. 3368/S.F. 4200 Reenactment of trigger activator legislation.

Already, the passage of H.F. 4075 in the House shows how legislators can work together in a bipartisan manner to make incremental changes on gun violence prevention measures.

Additionally, and in solidarity with the *Annunciation Light Alliance* parent group, we wish to bring greater attention to two measures that can help limit violence in schools (and in the public more generally):

1. H.F. 4434/S.F. 4674 Social Media Threat Assessment Reporting Requirement; and
2. H.F. 3497/S.F. 3825 Loaded firearm storage regulation related to persons prohibited from possessing firearms.

Undoubtedly, you have many challenges and difficult conversations ahead. Our moment requires statesmen and women who can rise to the occasion. A simple definition of a statesman is a person deeply versed in the art of government who directs public affairs with wisdom. Likewise, leadership is sometimes understood as guiding people to go where they are otherwise uninclined.

To be a statesman and leader is a work of skill and grace, and my prayer for all of you is that you employ your tremendous gifts to work for the common good of the people of Minnesota. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Most Rev. Bernard A. Hebda
Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis

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