

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 27, 2016

The Honorable James B. Comey  
Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
945 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20535

Dear Director Comey:

Across the country, communities are struggling with a new wave of threats of violence against schools. This past week, multiple schools in Delaware received computer-generated phone calls warning of bombs inside these schools. Yesterday, another bomb threat was made to a Delmarva middle school. These threats come on the heels of a series of bomb threats over the past several months against schools not only in Delaware, but in Maryland and Virginia as well. While, thankfully, no bombs were found in any of these incidents, the threats caused some schools to be evacuated, triggered law enforcement investigations, and raised concerns about the safety and welfare of school children.

As you know, Delaware and its neighboring states are not the only ones to confront threats of violence against schools in recent months. In California, the Los Angeles Unified school district—one of the largest in the United States—closed over 900 schools for a day after receiving bomb threats last year. In New Hampshire, school was canceled for 11,500 students after also receiving bomb threats last year. While these threats were later determined to be hoaxes, they created a great deal of stress and anxiety for the students, parents and educators alike, while disrupting the school day and undermining the ability of teachers to teach and students to earn.

It is our understanding that the investigation of the bomb threats in Delaware were conducted by the Delaware State Police and supported by local law enforcement units, as well. As we understand, bomb threats of this nature are viewed as criminal acts to be handled by state and local law enforcement. With that said, when a bomb threat seemingly replicates itself across multiple schools, school districts, and states—as the Delaware threats did— it may be appropriate to bring federal resources to bear, too, in order to identify the sources of the threats and to prevent future incidents from occurring. For example, it was publically reported that the Federal Bureau of Investigation is assisting state and local partners in identifying the source of threats to several schools districts made last week in eastern Massachusetts.

Moreover, threats of violence pose challenges for local communities, where superintendents or school boards working with state and local law enforcement must make difficult decisions on how to respond. Currently, there are no national guidelines to help officials determine threat levels. These officials must make decisions and balance the need for safety and protecting students with the desire not to cause undue panic if the threats are hoaxes. State and local

officials must also evaluate the legitimacy of threats that are increasingly coming through social media or other forms of technology that can be difficult to trace.

To better understand the type of assistance your office provides in these situations, we ask that you please provide information in response to the following questions:

1. Under what circumstances does the Federal Bureau of Investigation assist state and local law enforcement entities with investigations into threats of violence against schools?
2. Does the Federal Bureau of Investigation provide guidance or training to state and local law enforcement related to best practices for addressing threats of violence against schools?
3. Does the Federal Bureau of Investigation maintain statistics regarding school threats? If so, please provide those statistics, including the frequency with which individuals making threats of violence against schools are prosecuted?
4. Does the Federal Bureau of Investigation work with other Federal partners, including the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, to address threats of violence against schools?
5. Do the types of technologies used to make threats of violence against schools, including social media or computer-generated phone calls, make it more difficult to evaluate the credibility of a threat?

If you have any questions about this request, please feel free to contact our staffs. Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.

With best personal regards, we are

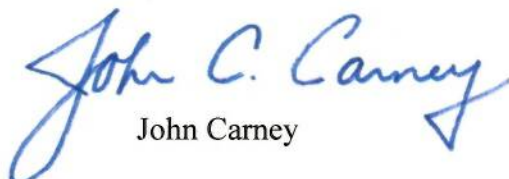
Sincerely yours,



Tom Carper



Chris Coons



John Carney