



**CRITICAL RESPONSE GROUP**  
America's Common Operating Picture™

May 5, 2022

**To: Chairman Mueller and Members of the House Committee on Government Operations**

**From: Joe Hanson, Regional Director, Critical Response Group**

**Re: Support for Critical Incident Mapping**

Chairman Mueller and members of the House Committee on Government Operations, thank you for your willingness to hold a hearing on House Bill 6042, relating to critical incident mapping. Chairman Mueller, I would also like to thank you for sponsoring this important piece of legislation, as well as the various members of the bipartisan House School Safety Task Force who co-sponsored this effort.

For background, in 2019, I left active duty as a Marine Raider and Special Operations Officer in Marine Special Operations Command. I served as the ground force commander for hundreds of combat operations in Afghanistan and elsewhere. After leaving active duty, I was excited to join Critical Response Group and move back to my home state of Wisconsin.

Critical Response Group was started with the goal of improving the national state of emergency preparation and response. Our company's founders, also Special Operations veterans, saw during their time in the Global War on Terrorism that collaboration, interoperability, and information-sharing between all branches of the military, intelligence agencies, and coalition partners was vital to the success of a mission.

These efforts lead to the development, validation, and adoption of a communication technique called the Gridded Reference Graphic (GRG). The GRG is a visual communication tool that combines a gridded overlay with high-resolution overhead imagery enabling all mission participants to communicate off of a sheet of paper about unfamiliar locations.

Coming home, they realized that the concept would increase the safety of their children's schools by enabling collaboration between first responders during emergencies at unfamiliar locations like schools. That is why CRG assists schools, government buildings and businesses throughout the country. For example, in New Jersey, over 70% of schools already use critical incident mapping.

In the state of Wisconsin, we have already partnered with many businesses, including most waterparks in the Wisconsin Dells, the Milwaukee Brewers, Molson-Coors, and SC Johnson, amongst others. Additionally, we have already assisted school districts there by mapping over 350 schools to support first-responder's response time.

The maps are universal for locations and are predicated on accurate overhead imagery with a grid overlay, creating what amount to a simple game of "battleship". Letters run across the top of the map, numbers down the left hand side, and north is always up. Each floor receives a map and all common language is labeled on the map for ease of communications. Easy to read, accurate, and accessible maps are the base for all movement and communication during a response to a critical incident at a school. This is the most essential tool during an emergency, and without it we have no common language to communicate about location.

Our partnership and success could not be done without the support of law enforcement. Having both law enforcement and schools working together is a successful formula in assuring that our schools, our children, and our communities are safer.

In closing, I am excited to support House Bill 6042. As someone who has worked with school leaders and law enforcement to map hundreds of schools across our country, I know firsthand how valuable and necessary this tool is. I know that this legislation will make our schools safer.

I respectfully ask you for your support in passing House Bill 6042.

I am now available for any questions.