

**IN THE CHANCERY COURT FOR DAVIDSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE
TWENTIETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT, PART III
AT NASHVILLE**

**CLATA RENEE BREWER; JAMES
HAMMOND; THE TENNESSEE
FIREARMS ASSOCIATION, INC.;
MICHAEL P. LEAHY; STAR NEWS
DIGITAL MEDIA, INC.; THE
TENNESSEAN; RACHEL WEGNER;
and TODD GARDENHIRE in his
individual capacity;**

Petitioners,

vs.

**METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT
OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON
COUNTY;**

Respondent,

**PARENTS OF MINOR COVENANT
STUDENTS JANE DOE AND JOHN
DOE; THE COVENANT SCHOOL;
And COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

Intervenors.

**Case No. 23-0538-III
CONSOLIDATED**

****controlling case****

DECLARATION OF KATHERINE E. KUHLMAN

I, Katherine E. Kuhlman, make the following statements upon personal knowledge.

1. I am a licensed clinical psychologist, board-certified in police and public safety psychology. I am licensed to practice in Arizona, California, and Hawaii, and also hold the PsyPact e-passport, which allows me to practice in over 20 additional states via telehealth, including Tennessee. My expertise, as outlined in my CV, attached hereto as Exhibit A, is in working with law enforcement and other public safety organizations in a multitude of capacities, including

treatment, evaluation, critical incident response, and training. I have provided training to law enforcement agencies and professional organizations regarding behavioral threat assessment and prevention of mass violence.

2. I have the unfortunate honor of supporting law enforcement agencies following mass casualty incidents, including school shootings. I have also consulted with both school districts and law enforcement agencies regarding students of concern to prevent potential attacks, such as the Covenant School shooting, by identifying red flags, behavioral changes, and assisting them in understanding the student's location on the Pathway to Violence. In such consultation, I have also provided mitigation and intervention recommendations. Furthermore, I routinely provide expert services to the Maricopa County Attorney's Office and Superior Court of Arizona regarding cases that involve persons on the Pathway to Violence (often stalking and weapons cases), to provide recommendations regarding diversion, probation conditions, and risk.

3. Reviews of the writings of those persons who engage in school shootings can be and has been useful in preventing other acts of similar violence. This is because of the simple concept that we learn from experience. The 2021 Report of the United States Secret Service and the Department of Homeland Security titled "Averting Targeted School Violence" observed that by studying a shooter's writings, including the shooter's motive, 67 plots of violence against K-12 schools from 2006-2018 were disrupted. The Secret Service has been studying such information about shooter motives to prevent or disrupt school shootings for several decades.

4. Since beginning this work in 2014, there were many students or persons of concern about whom I consulted that did not go on to commit violence. I believe this is due to parents, the school, and law enforcement working to mitigate risk by employing countermeasures/interventions, which pulled the individual away from the Pathway to Violence. These consultations

and recommendations would not be possible if it were not for the breadth and depth of research in the field of threat assessment, which involves detailed review of mass shootings and targeted violence. For example, the United States Secret Service - National Threat Assessment Center, published “Protecting America’s Schools- A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence” in 2019. In a 1999 Federal Bureau of Investigation paper regarding school shooters, then-Attorney General Janet Reno wrote, “We must continue to search for those crucial behavioral and environmental indicators which suggest that a threat of school violence may be real...we will be in a position to help those children who show a propensity for violence, before they scar themselves (and others) forever.”

5. A public release of the Nashville Covenant School shooting documents would not only be beneficial, but vital, in preventing future shootings. Understanding the root cause of the injustices the shooter perceived, the grudges they held, the pre-attack indicators that occurred, etc. allows for identification of red flags. When compared with other school shooters, we can then determine if this is a pattern in mass shootings. Continuing to sift through documents and data over time is important, given the ever-changing political, technological, and socio-cultural climate. Conducting a detailed analysis on the Covenant School shooting allows for recommendations to be made to law enforcement, schools and parents, and even the media, in prevention of future violence.

6. The release of school shooting documents, including writings of the shooters, needs to be made not just to law enforcement. The beneficial effects of reviewing these writings can be and have been obtained by schools and businesses. In connection with my work, I review such writings to provide these beneficial effects. Further, review of these writings have been used to assist in the development of state legislation designed to prevent future violence, including

violence at schools. I am aware of at least one other school shooting at which the parents wanted such information made public so that could be used to prevent future shootings.

7. The research concerning whether the release of information about a shooter, including his or her writings, will create a contagion that could cause a “copycat” killer is mixed and uncertain. However, there is a consensus that any such possible contagion is only short term, specifically only 14 days after the shooting incident. See *J. Kissner, Are Active Shootings Temporally Contagious? An Empirical Assessment*, (2016) *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*, 31, 48-58. One study focused on mass shootings between 2008 through 2018 and focused on short-term contagion. Using multivariate analysis, the study shows that while mass shootings have a strong effect on the level of news reporting, they have little impact on subsequent prevalence of mass shootings. *J.A. Fox, N.E. Sanders, E.E. Fridel, G. Duwe & M. Rocque, The Contagion of Mass Shootings: The Interdependence of Large-scale Massacres and Mass Media Coverage*, (2021), *Statistics and Public Policy*, 8(1), 53-66. This two week contagion period does not restart or renew itself every time there is a news story about the shooter.

8. The opinions I have expressed herein have been tested, have been subjected to peer review and publication, and was conducted independent of any particular litigation or dependent on an intention to provide any testimony, as evidenced by the reports and conclusions of the Secret Service cited above. Further, these opinions are based upon theories and techniques generally accepted in the scientific community, and they are trustworthy. The facts and data upon which I have relied in stating the opinions herein are of a type reasonably relied upon by experts who work in the field of studying school shootings in forming opinions or inferences about school shootings.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this 20th day of June, 2023.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katherine Kuhlman, PsyD". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K'.

Katherine E. Kuhlman, PsyD, ABPP