Trump says raise age for buying assault rifles, defying NRA

WASHINGTON (AP) — The nation should keep assault rifles out of the hands of anyone under 21, President Donald Trump declared Thursday, defying his loyal supporters in the National Rifle Association amid America's public reckoning over gun violence. He also pushed hard for arming security guards and many teachers in U.S. schools.

"There's nothing more important than protecting our children," Trump said, adding that he'd spoken with many members of Congress and NRA officials and insisting they would go along with his plans in the wake of last week's school shooting in Parkland, Florida, that left 17 people dead.

But there were no words of support from the NRA for his age-limit proposal — and outright opposition from organizations of teachers and school security guards for the idea of arming schools to deal with intruders.

"The NRA will back it and so will Congress," Trump contended as he called for raising the legal age of purchase for "all" guns from 18 to 21. A spokesman later said Trump was speaking specifically about semi-automatic weapons. The president's proposal came just hours after the NRA affirmed its opposition, calling such a restriction an infringement on gun owners'

Trump has spent the past two days listening to ideas about how to



President Donald Trump speaks during a meeting with state and local officials to discuss school safety in the Roosevelt Room of the White House on Thursday in Washington.

stem gun violence at schools after last week's shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. On Wednesday, he heard from students and family members of those killed in recent shootings and on Thursday from local and state

In Florida, meanwhile, funerals continued. And a sheriff's deputy who had been on duty at the school but never went inside to confront the shooter resigned after being suspended without pay.

Trump has been proposing a growing list of ideas, including more stringent background checks for gun buyers, reopening some

mental institutions to hold potential killers and banning "bump stock" devices that allow semi-automatic rifles to mimic machine guns.

He said Thursday that many teachers have military experience and suggested they be paid bonuses for the added responsibility of carrying weapons. He also appeared open to other proposals to "harden" schools, such as fortifying walls and limiting entry points.

One idea he didn't like: the active shooter drills that some schools hold. He called that "a very negative thing" and said he wouldn't want his own son participating.

Spokesman Raj Shah later said

Trump was concerned about the name and would prefer calling them safety drills.

In Florida, Republican Sen. Marco Rubio said he now is open to raising age limits for long-gun purchases. That was the day after he was confronted at a CNN town hall by Parkland students and parents over his pro-gun votes and support from the NRA.

Kansas Sen. Pat Roberts, another Republican, told reporters during a visit to the Kansas Statehouse that he supported raising age limits, saying: "Certainly, nobody under 21 should have an AR-15."

NRA leaders emerged in unannounced appearances at the annual Conservative Political Action Conference, blaming the FBI and local reporting failures for the Florida shooting.

Evil walks among us and God help us if we don't harden our schools and protect our kids," said Executive Vice President and CEO Wayne LaPierre. "The whole idea from some of our opponents that armed security makes us less safe is completely ridiculous.'

NRA officials also accused Democrats and media outlets of exploiting the Florida shooting.

"Many in legacy media love mass shootings," spokeswoman Dana Loesch said at ĈPAC. "Now I'm not saying that you love the tragedy, but I am saying that you love the ratings. Crying white mothers are ratings gold."

She and LaPierre did not mention the age limit issue in their fiery remarks at CPAC. But Loesch said Wednesday night the NRA opposes the higher age limit for rifles because, "if we are asking young men and women to go and serve their country (in the military) they should be able to also have a

firearm.' The NRA was an early supporter of Trump's campaign, and it remains unclear how far the president will

go to cross them. Shortly before LaPierre took the stage, Trump offered a rallying cry on Twitter, calling NRA leaders "Great People and Great American Patriots. They love our Country and will do the right thing.

"I don't think I'll be going up against them," he said of the politically influential group. "I really think the NRA wants to do what's

In Congress, a bill being drafted by Sens. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., and Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., would apply more broadly than just to assault rifles such as the AR-15 used in the Florida shootings. It would raise the age limits for all rifles.

In the end, Trump did not stray too far from conservative Republican orthodoxy. His focus when it comes to background checks is on mental health concerns and not loopholes that permit loose private gun sales on the internet and at gun shows. And he remains opposed to a full ban on assault rifles.

Sheriff: School officer never went inside to confront gunman

Fla. (AP) — The armed officer on duty at the Florida school where a shooter killed 17 people never went inside to engage the gunman and has been placed under investigation, officials announced Thursday.

The Valentine's Day at Marjory shooting Stoneman Douglas High School by a gunman armed with an AR-15 style assault rifle has reignited national debate over gun laws and school safety, including proposals by President Donald Trump and others to designate more people including trained teachers

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Awards With AARP The Magazine

Soundstage

Great Performances "Matthew

to carry arms on school Gun-control grounds. advocates, meanwhile, have redoubled their push to ban assault rifles.

school resource The officer at the high school took up a position viewing the western entrance of the building that was under attack for more than four minutes, but "he never went in," Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel said at a Thursday news conference. The shooting lasted about six

The officer, Scot Peterson, was suspended without pay and placed under investigation, then chose to resign,

Israel said. When asked what Peterson should have done, Israel said the deputy should have "went in, addressed the killer, killed the killer."

The sheriff said he was "devastated, sick to my stomach. There are no words. I mean, these families lost their children. I've been to the funerals. ... I've been to the vigils. It's just, ah, there are no words.'

There was also a communication issue between the person reviewing the school's security system footage and officers who responded to the school.

Coral Springs Police Chief Tony Pustizzi said during a

Thursday news conference that the footage being reviewed was 20 minutes old, so the responding officers were hearing that the shooter was in a certain place while officers already in that location were saying that wasn't the case.

Pustizzi said the confusion

didn't put anyone in danger. Shooting suspect Nikolas Cruz, 19, has been jailed on 17 counts of murder and has admitted the attack. He owned a collection of weapons.

Defense attorneys, state records and people who knew him indicate that he displayed behavioral troubles for years.

Broward County incident reports show that unidencallers contacted authorities with concerns about Cruz in February 2016 and November 2017. The first caller said they had third-hand information that Cruz planned to shoot up the school.

The information was forwarded to the Stoneman Douglas resource officer. The second caller said Cruz was collecting guns and knives and believed "he could be a school shooter in the making."

Politicians under pressure to tighten gun laws in response to the mass shooting floated various plans Thursday, but most fell short of reforms demanded by student activists who converged Wednesday on Florida's Capitol.

Florida House Speaker Richard Corcoran said Thursday night that his chamber is going to recommend creating a special commission to investigate the "abject breakdown at all levels" that led to the shooting deaths.

The Republican said the commission, likely be led by a parent of one of the slain children, would have subpoena power.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON & EVENING **FEBRUARY 23, 2018** 10 рм | 10:30 | 11 рм | 11:30 | 12 PM | 12:30 | 1 PM | 1:30 | 2 PM | 2:30 | 3 PM | 3:30 | 4 PM | 4:30 | 5 PM | 5:30 | 6 PM | 6:30 Paid Paterni- Divorce Paid Program ty Court Court Program Modern | Modern | 2 Broke | 2 Broke | Showtime at the Apollo Family | Family | Girls | Girls | a Half Man St. 3 12 O' News (N) Y. Icons A.Athlete Missing Stanton People's Court (N) Judy Showtime at the Apollo BlueB. 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F*★★ Mr. and Mrs. Smith ('05, Act) Brad Pitt. ♥★★★ The Book of Eli Denzel Washington. 60 \\ ★★★ True Lies ('94, Act) Jamie Lee Curtis. ♥★★ Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines 24 Parole "Face Off" | Pit Bull Parolees | Treehouse Treehouse Treehouse Treehouse (N) ·05 Treehouse Treehouse Treehouse Treehouse Treehouse :05 Treehouse 43 Mom Mom Mom Mom Zookeeper ('11, Com) Kevin James Broken Skull Ch. Broken Skull Ch. Pickler & Ben 72 Closing Bell PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics Curling Shark Tank Shark Tank Shark Tank Shark Tank Shark Tank Shark Tank Paid Program CNN Newsroom CNN Tonight The Lead The Situation The Situation OutFront A. Cooper 360 A. Cooper 360 CNN Tonight **CNN Tonight** A. Cooper 360 A. Cooper 360 Rush "Lost Gold" Gold Rush Gold Rush (N) :05 Gold Rush **Dual Survival Dual Survival Dual Survival** Gold Rush Gold Rush Gold Rush (N) Bunk'd Bunk'd Jessie Jessie StuckM. StuckM. Bizaard. Bizaard. :15 * Zombies Meg Donnelly. 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