

**Attachment—Additional Questions for the Record**

**Subcommittee on Health  
Hearing on  
“High Anxiety and Stress: Legislation to Improve Mental Health During Crisis”  
June 30, 2020**

**Ms. Arriana Gross  
National Youth Advisory Board Member  
Sandy Hook Promise Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE) Promise Club  
11th Grade Student at Newton High School (Covington, GA)**

**The Honorable Scott Peters (D-CA):**

1. As students may begin to return to school and/or continue to learn virtually, could you please share what it has been like for you to learn virtually, and also testify before the Committee virtually?

*Response from Arriana Gross: I experienced a lot of challenges with technology both leading up to and on the day of the hearing itself. Joining video calls has been an issue for me because my home WiFi does not always support the bandwidth needed for video calls, sometimes kicking me offline or freezing my screen. In preparation for the hearing, my SAVE Club Advisor, Sharmaine Brown, helped me get a new tablet with a camera, and the Sandy Hook Promise team sent me a WiFi extender to help with my service. Even with all of that preparation, my internet service had an outage on the day of the hearing! I was panicked as you could imagine. Luckily my advisor was there to help me. We quickly planned for her to pick me up and take me to her house to complete my testimony. However, as the hearing was close to starting, we were nervous there wasn't enough time to get to her home which was an hour across town. Instead, we ended up stopping at a local McDonald's, and the Store Manager agreed to allow us to use their internet and try their best to keep things quiet for the length of the hearing. Overall, I thought the hearing went well and was very appreciative for the opportunity to testify.*

*Now that we are officially “back in school”, I can say that learning virtually has been a challenge for me and my classmates on the technological side. On my first day of virtual learning this school year, the whole internet line crashed and we couldn't access our classes. However, that was resolved. However, educationally I've actually been enjoying my first few virtual days! Despite tech issues, educationally, for me, no value was lost.*

2. You mentioned that your SAVE Promise Club participated in Sandy Hook Promise's Say Something training, which teaches students about violence and suicide prevention. Can

you explain more about what these trainings entail and how they're received by students within the club?

**Response from Arriana Gross:** *Say Something teaches us [students] to understand signs and signals of harm, including self-harm, for ourselves and our peers and how to reach out and seek help from a trusted adult. These trainings are done in-person and online. During Call to Action weeks and throughout the school year, my SAVE Promise Club, Jared's Heart of Success, implements activities to help raise student awareness about violence and promote positive activities to prevent it. Most recently, when we were all learning from home, we organized virtual meetings where we talked to students about "Practicing our PEAs"—Positive Enjoyable Activities! Things like going for a run, connecting with friends and family on FaceTime—these things are very important now when we aren't seeing each other in person at school. I wish that all students, including at my high school, would have the opportunity to receive this training because it has had such a positive impact on my life and on my friends and peers who I have personally helped along the way. In Georgia, every student is required to have physical education, but why aren't we required to have mental health education?*