



United States Senate
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Chairman Joseph I. Lieberman, ID-Conn.

Security on America's College Campuses
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Senator Joe Lieberman
April 23, 2007

Good afternoon.

For the first time since the awful outburst of violence and death on their beautiful campus last Monday, students at Virginia Tech return to their classes today. But neither they nor the rest of the country can return to where we were before that terrible tragedy, certainly not the families and friends of the 32 people who were murdered in Blacksburg, Virginia, a week ago today. Our hearts go out to them, and our prayers do too.

This hearing is not about what happened at Virginia Tech, but, of course, we would not be holding this hearing if last Monday's massacre had not happened.

Virginia's governor, Tim Kaine, has appointed a commission that will thoroughly investigate and review the events of last Monday. That is the best place for such a review to be carried out.

We have convened this hearing, not to investigate, but to help answer the questions that so many college students and faculty, their families and friends, and surrounding communities are asking after Virginia Tech.

Are America's colleges and universities doing enough to maintain security? What are the best ways to do that? What methods and technologies does experience tell us have been most effective in keeping college communities safe? How can campuses be more alert to the needs of emotionally troubled students and the dangers they may pose? How can those students best be helped before they hurt themselves or others? Are there federal laws or programs that should be changed to help America's colleges and universities maintain better security on their campuses?

In sum, we are here to begin a discussion, in the aftermath of Virginia Tech, to make sure that together we are doing everything we can to prevent any other American campus from experiencing the nightmare Virginia Tech experienced last Monday. I thank the witnesses who have come here on short notice and I look forward to their testimony with the confidence that their experience will be very helpful to us.

Thank you. Senator Collins?