

# Democratic Candidate Crashes Texas Governor's Uvalde Shooting Press Conference and Politicizes Tragedy

Democratic Texas governor candidate Beto O'Rourke crashed a press conference held by Texas Gov. Greg Abbott Wednesday to address the Uvalde school massacre that left 19 students and 2 teachers dead. His intentions were not to mourn the dead but to criticize Abbott and make a political show of it.

A little over 15 minutes into the press conference, and directly after Abbott announced a number for the public to call to get mental health counseling, O'Rourke approached the stage and addressed Gov. Abbott directly.

"Governor, I have to say something. The time for you to stop this was after Santa Fe High School," O'Rourke said.

Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, also in attendance, interjected and spoke over O'Rourke, saying, "Sit down. Don't pull a stunt. Sit down. Sit down and don't play this stuff."

O'Rourke defiantly continued and criticized Abbott's handling of past school shooting incidents in Texas.

"The time to stop the next shooting is right now, and you're doing nothing," O'Rourke said. "You're offering us nothing. You said, 'This is not predictable.' This is totally predictable when you choose not to do anything."

As O'Rourke continued to rant, Uvalde Mayor Don McLaughlin jumped in and said, "Sir, you are out of line. Sir, you are out of line! Sir, you are out of line! Please leave this auditorium."

Mayor McLaughlin continued, "I can't believe you're an [expletive] who comes to a deal like this to make a political issue."

As the audience realized it was O'Rourke, they swarmed him, taking cell phone videos as police escorted him out of the auditorium.

During the press conference, Gov. Abbott talked about the evil in the heart of the shooter, who shot his grandmother Tuesday before going on a shooting spree in an elementary school. His grandmother lived and contacted police.

"It is intolerable, and it is unacceptable for us to have in this state anybody who would kill little kids in our schools," Abbott said. "Children are a blessing. God teaches us that.

"To say the least, Uvalde has been shaken to its core. Families are broken apart. Hearts are forever shattered. All Texans are grieving with the people of Uvalde, and people are rightfully angry. ... Events like this, they tear at the fabric of a community. Our job is to ensure that the community is not going to be ripped apart. All Texans must come together and support the families who have been affected by this horrific tragedy."

Abbott praised law enforcement for "running toward gunfire for the singular purpose of trying to save lives." He then recounted the details of the shooting and the response of law enforcement. Near the end of the press conference he asked leaders, law enforcement and elected officials in the community, "What is the problem here?"

They told him emphatically, "We have a problem with mental health illness in this community."

O'Rourke equated the problem to something else. In a Twitter post, he asked Abbott to ask the NRA to cancel its convention in Texas. He said in another post, "Abbott made it easier to

carry guns in public. The moment to stop the next slaughter is right now.”

In an interview with *Good Morning America's* Amy Robach, McLaughlin said, “Everybody comes in and talks about immediately, ‘We want to do gun control. We want to sanction the gun lobbyists. We want to sanction this and we want to sanction that.’ But you know what? ... Let’s talk about mental health and let’s do something.” {eo}

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