



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

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PATRICK YOES
National President

JIM PASCO
Executive Director

17 September 2020

The Honorable Thomas R. Tillis
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Tillis,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our strong support for S. 4605, the “Protect and Serve Act,” which you have introduced. This legislation is a legislative priority for the FOP and takes on a particular urgency in the wake of the vicious ambush attack on two deputies with the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department a few days ago.

The legislation would impose Federal penalties on individuals who deliberately target local, State or Federal law enforcement officers with violence. Eighteen percent (18%) of the officers killed by gunfire in 2019 died as a result of an ambush. So far this year, 229 officers have been shot in the line of duty, 35 of whom died. Eight officers in North Carolina have been shot so far this year, one of whom was killed. Twenty-four law enforcement officers have been ambushed this year, seven of whom were killed. The lethality of these attacks would be much greater but for dramatic improvements in medical trauma science and anti-ballistic technology.

Congress should act and act now to address the terrible violence aimed at our law enforcement officers—because the ambush in Los Angeles County will not be the last—by passing the “Protect and Serve Act.” This would send a strong show of support for the men and women in the line of fire and a clear message to those who would seek to do them harm.

These types of attacks, and violence targeting law enforcement officers in general, have been steadily increasing in recent years. A recent report from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) concluded: “While the overall number of officers who were feloniously killed was declining, the percentage of officers feloniously killed during surprise attacks was increasing.” A December 2017 study by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), which examined law enforcement officer fatalities from 2010-2016, found that 20% of ambushed officers were seated in their patrol cars and 56% of officers killed in an ambush were not on a call or engaged in any enforcement activity. Many of these officers were simply eating, sitting on post, or were targeted and killed while at their home or on their way home.

Despite this, apart from a House vote on the “Protect and Serve Act” in 2018, Congress has done nothing to address the national problem of ambushes, unprovoked attacks, and targeted violence against our nation’s law enforcement officers. The FOP strongly supports your introduction of the “Protect and Serve Act” to protect officers like the two LASD deputies fighting for their lives as well as the seven fallen heroes who were ambushed and killed by cowardly murderers:

-- BUILDING ON A PROUD TRADITION --



Officer Kaulike Kalama
Honolulu Police Department, Hawaii

Trooper Joseph Jon Bullock
Florida Highway Patrol, Florida

Officer Tiffany-Victoria Bilon Enriquez
Honolulu Police Department, Hawaii

Corporal Andrew J. Gillette
Sumter County Sheriff's Office, South Carolina

Police Officer Nick O'Rear
Kimberly Police Department, Alabama

Sergeant Ricardo Perez-Ortiz
Puerto Rico Police Department, Puerto Rico

Sergeant Damon Gutzwiller
Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office, California

To be in law enforcement is to put yourself in harm's way, but no officer should be at risk while simply sitting in their patrol car, standing a post, or heading for home at the end of a shift. When a member of the public calls for help, we answer that call.

On behalf of the more than 355,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I thank you for your leadership and for your support of the men and women in law enforcement. I look forward to working with you and your staff to get this bill to the Senate floor for a vote. If I can provide any additional information or support for this effort, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in my Washington, D.C. office.

Sincerely,



Patrick Yoes
National President