



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

Representing America's Finest

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**Executive Director and
General Counsel**

April 11, 2019

The Honorable Charles Grassley
United States Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Grassley:

On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO) and the over 241,000 rank-and-file officers we represent across the country, I am writing to you to express our strong support for the Protecting America's First Responders Act.

The Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Program was designed to offer peace of mind to men and women seeking careers in public safety and to make a strong statement about the value that American Society places on the contributions of those who serve their communities in potentially dangerous circumstances. The current state of the PSOB Program, however, does little to instill confidence in officers that the federal government will do its part to take care of them should they become disabled in the line of duty, which is why the Protecting America's First Responders Act is so important.

The stringent requirements for PSOB disability benefits make it extremely difficult for officers to qualify, which we believe goes against what Congress intended when it created the disability benefit in 1990. This legislation will ease the strict requirements for disabled officers to qualify for PSOB disability benefits, ensuring that officers who are catastrophically injured in the line of duty, but can still perform some level of meaningful work, would still qualify for the much-needed benefit. Disabled officers have been left behind and this bill will ensure they are not forgotten.

Additionally, the Protecting America's First Responders Act will also help protect the ability of survivors, disabled officers and their families to get the benefits they so rightly deserve. It will ensure that beneficiaries receive the highest award amount possible and it will make certain that all children of public safety officers disabled or killed in the line of duty are able to benefit from the Public Safety Officers' Education Assistance program.

We thank you for your continued leadership on this issue and we look forward to working with you to pass this important legislation. If we can provide any additional information or assistance, please feel free to contact me at (703) 549-0775.

Sincerely,

William J. Johnson
Executive Director