



April 11, 2019

The Honorable Charles Grassley  
U.S. Senate  
135 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Grassley,

The Peace Officers Research Association of California (“PORAC”) is the nation’s largest statewide public safety association, representing approximately 75,000 public safety professionals and 930 associations across California. We are pleased to support the Protecting America’s First Responders Act (S.\_\_\_\_).

Your legislation will make much needed improvements to the Public Safety Officers’ Benefits (PSOB) program, which provides death, disability, and education benefits to families of officers who killed or injured in the line of duty. Your bill’s proposed changes to the program will ensure officers and their families receive the full benefits to which they are entitled, giving officers the peace of mind knowing that, should something happen to them, care will be taken of their families.

Your bill makes the important improvements to the program:

- Increases the program’s interim benefit payments (i.e., payments provided to officers that are likely to receive benefits) from \$3,000 to \$6,000 and bases future benefit payments on the CPI standard inflation rate;
- Sets the PSOB’s death and disability benefit amounts on the date of distribution instead of the date of the officer’s death or disability (factoring in the benefit increase that occurs with inflation);
- Amends the program so officers who become paraplegic, quadriplegic, or blind on the job receive disability benefits (currently the program only provides disability benefits to police officers whose injury prevents them from “performing any gainful work”);
- Authorizes the DOJ to use certain investigation tools (e.g., subpoenas) to obtain necessary information from third parties to expedite the claims process for those who apply for the benefits; and
- Requires the DOJ to reimburse children who are beneficiaries of the program (i.e., are offspring of public safety officers killed or disabled in the line of duty) for their education costs.



The bill also allows officers previously deemed ineligible for PSOB benefits, but who would be eligible under the bill's proposed amendments, to apply (within three years) for benefits. Such eligible officers would receive benefits retroactively.

PORAC applauds your leadership on this issue, and stands ready to work with you to secure its enactment. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at the PORAC Headquarters at (916) 928-3777 or contact our federal legislative advocates at Steptoe & Johnson LLP at (202) 429-6457.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
Peace Officers Research Association of California

Brian Marvel  
President