

SERGEANTS BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION

POLICE DEPARTMENT, CITY OF NEW YORK

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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

EDWARD D. MULLINS

April 24, 2019

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Grassley and Gillibrand:

I am writing on behalf of the more than 13,000 members of the Sergeants Benevolent Association of the New York City Police Department to advise you of our strong support for S. 1208, the *Protecting America's First Responders Act*. We appreciate your continued leadership on this issue and your willingness to work with us and other law enforcement organizations to make critical improvements to the Public Safety Officer Benefits (PSOB) program.

According to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, 34 law enforcement officers have been killed in the line of duty so far in 2019, while thousands more have been shot, stabbed, beaten, or otherwise injured. The Public Safety Officer's Benefit (PSOB) program was enacted by Congress to ensure that the men and women who have dedicated their lives to public safety and the rule of law have access to death, disability, and educational benefits in the event that they are killed or injured in the line of duty. This program has been a critical lifeline and a source of certainty for law enforcement officers who put their lives on the line every day. Over the years, however, improvements to the program have become necessary to ensure law enforcement officers have confidence that the program will be there for officers and their families when they need it most.

The *Protecting America's First Responders Act* makes several important changes to the PSOB program. First, the legislation updates the program's definition of disability to ensure that officers who are permanently disabled in the line of duty and unable to find gainful employment have access to this critical benefit. Second, the legislation provides for crucial updates to ensure that officers, survivors, and their families are entitled to the benefits for which they have worked so hard. Finally, the legislation makes clear that all children of public safety officers disabled or killed in the line of duty are eligible for the Public Safety Officer's Education Assistance program. These improvements are critical to law enforcement officers and their families and the SBA is proud to work with you to see S. 1208 enacted into law.

On behalf of the membership of the Sergeants Benevolent Association, thank you again for your leadership on this important issue. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or our Washington Representatives Andrew Siff and Chris Granberg at (202) 457-7756, if we can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Ed Mullins

