



VIOLENTLY INJURED POLICE  
OFFICERS ORGANIZATION

April 25, 2019

The Honorable Chuck E. Grassley  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kirsten E. Gillibrand  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
Dear Senators Grassley and Gillibrand,

I am writing to thank you for your support of our nation's first responders by introducing S. 1208, the "Protecting America's First Responders Act." This legislation will significantly improve the Public Safety Officers' Benefit (PSOB) program for those severely injured serving communities across the country.

Terms such as "catastrophic injury" and "gainful work" are often misinterpreted and can prevent officers who are catastrophically injured in the line of duty from receiving PSOB benefits. This legislation addresses issues by updating PSOB disability definitions of "gainful work" to be more consistent with existing Federal law. While these benefits cannot begin to replace all that these heroes have lost, it is our profound hope that the provisions in S1208 will help severely disabled officers to obtain the benefits that they deserve.

Too often, and especially in cases involving a disabling injury, paralysis, traumatic brain injury, heart attack or stroke; the PSOB process can take years—which is a much too long and far too frustrating process for these officers and their families. PAFRA addresses this problem specifically by:

- Requiring PSOB benefits be awarded based on the effective amount as of the date of benefit determination, rather than the date of the injury
- Expanding the program's subpoena authority to more efficiently secure records needed to evaluate claims.
- Making education assistance for eligible survivor family members, who pay out-of-pocket education expenses while awaiting a decision, retroactive

While no law, benefit or government program can heal permanent, life altering, disabilities. This legislation can reduce the financial pressures these families face, allowing them to focus on healing, rehabilitation and finding their new normal. It can literally mean the difference in

whether these families can stay in their homes, keep their kids in their schools and maintain some sense of normalcy in a life that's been robbed of anything "normal." Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mario Oliveira', with a stylized, flowing script.

Mario Oliveira

Co-founder

Violently Injured Police Officers Assoc.

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