

Safeguarding America's First Responders (SAFR)
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Background

The Public Safety Officers' Benefit (PSOB) program provides public safety officers (PSO) who are killed in the line of duty with a one-time lump sum payment of \$359,316 and/or education assistance of \$1,224.00 per month to their children or spouse. Infectious diseases are covered under a line-of-duty death as long as evidence indicates that the infectious disease was contracted while on duty. Providing evidence that a deadly disease was contracted on duty can be straightforward in instances where an officer comes into contact with a dirty needle however, in the case of COVID-19, it can be very difficult to provide evidence that the virus was contracted on duty.

What the bill does

- Creates a presumption that if a first responder is diagnosed with COVID-19 within 45 days of their last day on duty, the Department of Justice will treat it as a line of duty incident.
- The presumption will guarantee payment of benefits to any first responder who dies from COVID-19 or a complication therefrom.
- The presumption will run from January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2021.
- The presumption will require a diagnosis of COVID-19 or evidence indicating that the officer had COVID-19 at the time of death. This covers officers in high impact areas where finding tests can be difficult.

Endorsements

- Fraternal Order of Police
- National Association of Police Officers
- International Association of Fire Fighters
- International Association of Fire Chiefs
- Sergeants Benevolent Association of New York
- Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association
- National Association of School Resource Officers