



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

328 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., NE
WASHINGTON, DC 20002
PHONE (202) 547-8189 • FAX (202) 547-8190

PATRICK YOES
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

JIM PASCO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

15 November 2019

The Honorable Daniel W. Lapinski
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Lapinski,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our support for H.R. 4897, the "Public Safety Retirees Healthcare Protection Act," which would protect and improve the existing benefit for our nation's law enforcement and other public safety officers.

In 2006, the FOP played a crucial role in the development and ultimate enactment of the Healthcare Enhancement for Local Public Safety (HELPS) Retirees Act. Congress recognized that the physical demands on law enforcement and other public safety professionals often force these officers to retire earlier than those in other occupations. In fact, many local, State and Federal agencies have mandatory retirement ages for their officers, and, in these instances, retired officers may lose their employer-provided health insurance upon or shortly after their retirement—a time when they are years away from being eligible for Medicare. This, coupled with the fact that law enforcement and other public safety officers face greater health care needs than other professions because of the hazards they faced in the line of duty, forces them to spend a considerable amount of their limited income on health insurance premiums. It was simply unacceptable for our nation's heroes to pay such a large percentage of their retirement dollars toward long-term care insurance premiums and Congress addressed this issue by passing the HELPS Retirees Act. This law provides a modest tax benefit to help retired public safety officers afford health insurance by allowing the use, on a pretax basis, of up to \$3,000 annually from their pension funds (including defined benefit plans and defined contribution plans) to pay for premiums on health care and long-term care insurance.

This provision was passed in 2006 and, as you know, healthcare costs in our country have risen considerably in the last decade. Our officers are once again struggling with healthcare costs when they enter retirement. Your bill would help these families by increasing the pretax benefit to \$6,000.

On behalf of the more than 349,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I would like to thank you for your efforts to support our law enforcement officers, especially those in retirement. If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco through my Washington office.

Sincerely,

National President

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