



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

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CHUCK CANTERBURY
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

29 March 2019

The Honorable Brian P. Babin
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Val B. Demings
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Representatives Babin and Demings,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our support for your bill, H.R. 838, the “Threat Assessment, Prevention and Safety (TAPS) Act.”

Too many of our citizens in too many of our communities do not feel safe when going about their lives. School students and concert-goers are concerned for their safety. People in darkened nightclubs and theatres are apprehensive of unknown and unseen threats. People in houses of worship seeking peace and fellowship are worried about their security at a time when episodes of indiscriminate mass violence seem to be increasing all over the world. Our fellow citizens should not have to live, work or pray in fear.

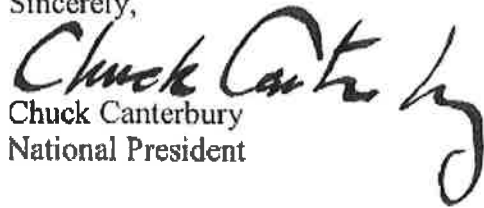
Too often law enforcement responses to the aftermath of these tragic events, but we agree with you both that there are steps we can take to better prevent violence before it occurs. The TAPS Act would provide resources to create a national strategy to identify, investigate, and mitigate possibly violent behavior through multi-disciplinary behavioral threat assessment and management. Just as the Office of National Drug Control Policy was established to set out our strategy in combatting our nation’s drug problem and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services has served as the cornerstone for our nation’s crime-fighting efforts for more than two decades, your bill will help craft a national, comprehensive approach to stopping violent acts before they can be carried out.

The perpetrators of these horrific act—whether motivated by hatred, skewed vengeance or as a by-product of mental illness—often telegraphed their dangerous intentions. In some cases, there were warning signs, or even specific threats, that went unreported or unnoticed before a mass casualty event. In part, this is because we do not have comprehensive or coordinated systems to identify these individuals and get them help or stop them before they hurt themselves or others. The legislation you have introduced would provide the resources for communities to identify those who make threats, evaluate the credibility of the threat, and respond in an appropriate way that takes into account the perspective of law enforcement, educators, social workers, and mental health experts. The National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security is just one example of how behavioral threat assessment and management is used by law enforcement agencies to prevent violence. The TAPS Act would provide similar resources for communities large and small to implement these preventative measures.

—BUILDING ON A PROUD TRADITION—

On behalf of the more than 345,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, we look forward to working with you both to advance this bill and make our communities safer. If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or my Executive Director, Jim Pasco, in my Washington office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chuck Canterbury". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "y" at the end.

Chuck Canterbury
National President