



# NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

328 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NE  
WASHINGTON, DC 20002  
PHONE 202-547-8189 • FAX 202-547-8190

**CHUCK CANTERBURY**  
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

**JAMES O. PASCO, JR.**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
30 APRIL 2019**

**CONTACT: TIM RICHARDSON  
(202) 547-8189**

## **HOUSE AND SENATE INTRODUCE BILL TO PERMANENTLY AUTHORIZE THE BULLTPROOF VEST GRANT PROGRAM**

Chuck Canterbury, National President of the Fraternal Order of Police, welcomed news that our allies in the House and the Senate have introduced legislation, H.R. 2379/S. 1231 that would make the authorization for the Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) grant program permanent.

“The FOP worked with Senator Leahy, the sponsor of the Senate bill, to create this program in 1998—more than two decades ago,” Canterbury said. “Our goal then is the same goal now—to increase the number of law enforcement officers wearing soft body armor by helping State and local law enforcement agencies buy this equipment.”

Since 1999, more than 13,000 jurisdictions received a total of \$467 million in Federal funds for the purchase of nearly 1.35 million vests. The program’s current authorization expires in FY2020. The legislation introduced today would permanently authorize the BVP program.

“Since it was first enacted, the FOP has been very grateful for all the support we have received from our friends in Congress. The House bill has six original cosponsors—Representatives Pascrell, King, Demings and Fitzpatrick as well as Ranking Member Collins and Pete Visclosky, an original cosponsor from the 1998 bill that started the program.”

“In the Senate, the bill is cosponsored by Chairman Graham, Ranking Member Feinstein as well as Senators Blumenthal, Collins, Coons, Cornyn, Durbin, Gardner, Grassley, Hawley, Hirono, Klobuchar, Tillis, Toomey and Whitehouse,” Canterbury said. “We are so very grateful that this legislation has earned such broad bipartisan support from every region of the country. It demonstrates just how important this program is to our members.”

The first certified “save”—that is a shooting that would have resulted in the death of an officer had it not been for the use of soft body armor—was in December 1975. Since that time, more than 3,100 officers have been certified as saved by their bullet-resistant vest.

“As I have said before, there is no legislation, no government program, no grant or public-private partnership that can erase the sad fact that law enforcement officers will die in the line of duty at the hands of armed and violent criminals—a threat that has increased in recent years as more officers have become victims to targeted attacks,” Canterbury said. “Body armor is one of the

—BUILDING ON A PROUD TRADITION—

most important pieces of equipment an officer can have and often is the difference between life and death. It is critical that this program be permanently authorized so that it can continue to make these vests available to more officers in every region of the country.”

The Fraternal Order of Police is the largest law enforcement labor organization in the United States, with more than 348,000 members.