



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

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CHUCK CANTERBURY
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

JAMES O. PASCO, JR.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

26 April 2019

The Honorable Joshua D. Hawley
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Hawley and Whitehouse,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our support for your bill, S. 998, the "Supporting and Treating Officers in Crisis (STOIC) Act."

Law enforcement officers put themselves in harm's way on a daily basis as they go about their sworn duty to serve and protect our communities. We do a very good job at protecting our officers' physical safety by providing them with tools like anti-ballistic body armor. Thousands of officers have been saved by this equipment. However, it is a sad fact that we lose more officers to suicide every year than die in the line of duty. We must do more to help the officers suffering from job-related stress and address the need for better mental resiliency and wellness for our officers and their families.

The legislation you have introduced will revive and expand programs designed to help officers and their families with stress reduction, suicide prevention, and the promotion of overall mental health and wellness. We believe that these programs have the potential to save just as many lives as soft body armor.

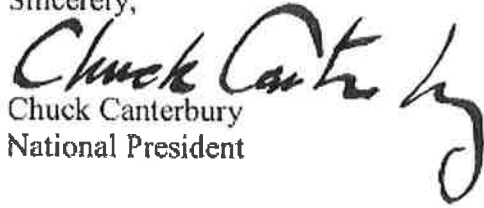
Under current law and the bill as introduced, these programs would be administered by the Bureau of Justice Assistance in the U.S. Department of Justice. Given the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) administers the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act and has such expertise in mental health and wellness issues for law enforcement, we would recommend that the programs established by S. 998 be transferred to the COPS Office. We would be happy to work with you and your staff on such an effort.

I know firsthand that the men and women in law enforcement are proud of their service, but that service comes at a cost. The physical and mental stress these officers endure of the course of their career will take their toll, and we believe we have a duty to assist and support them any way we can.

—BUILDING ON A PROUD TRADITION—

On behalf of the more than 348,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I am grateful to your both for your leadership on this issue and look forward to working with you to get this legislation to the President's desk. If I can be of any additional help to you, please feel free 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