



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

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CHUCK CANTERBURY
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

15 February 2017

The Honorable Orrin G. Hatch
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Hatch,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our support for S. 367, the "Probation Officer Protection Act." This legislation will amend section 3606 of Title 18, United States Code, to grant probation officers authority to arrest hostile third parties who obstruct or impede a probation officer in the performance of official duties.

Probation officers supervise men, women and juveniles who are convicted of a crime. Instead of a judge sentencing these offenders to prison, the judge sentences them to close supervision while continuing to live and work with the general public. A probation officer's job title comes with an inherent element of danger due to the supervision of offenders such as drug addicts, sexual offenders and domestic violence offenders who could turn violent at any time. Offenders are often intimidated by the amount of power a probation officer has over their freedom. If they feel the officer will recommend a prison sentence or report illegal activity, which may lead to a prison sentence, they may try to eliminate this threat by harming the officer.

When probation officers are accosted by a violent third party, they are forced to retreat because they have no third-party arrest authority. They also cannot assist any police officer at the scene who may have been called to assist. This subjects everyone involved in the situation to greater risk and can result in the loss of evidence, the escape of an offender, or harm to an individual.

In the past, offenders typically reported to the probation officer's office for scheduled visits. Now many probation officers are required to make home visits where the offender may have easy access to weapons. While the officer may carry a gun, and have armed back up in some cases, often he or she will go into the home or workplace alone without knowing anything about other persons at the site.

For these reasons, this authority is needed and we are proud to support your bill and look forward to working with you on it.

On behalf of more than 330,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I want to thank you for introducing this legislation and amendment. If I can be of further help, please do not hesitate to contact me or my Senior Advisor, Jim Pasco, in my Washington office.

Sincerely,


Chuck Canterbury
National President