



# NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

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## **HOUSE UNANIMOUSLY PASSES THE SAFEGUARDING AMERICA'S FIRST RESPONDERS ACT**

Patrick Yoes, National President of the Fraternal Order of Police, applauded today's news that the United States House of Representatives considered and unanimously passed S. 3607, the "Safeguarding America's First Responders Act," which was introduced by Senators Charles E. Grassley (R-IA) and Corey A. Booker (D-NJ). The legislation will be transmitted to the President, who is expected to sign it into law.

"We knew at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic that law enforcement officers on the frontlines combating this pandemic would be increasingly vulnerable to contracting the virus," said Yoes. "We are sad to report that as of today, 154 law enforcement officers have died in the line of duty due to COVID-19."

The Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) program provides that the surviving family members of a public safety officer who contracts an infectious disease in the line of duty and dies as a result of its contraction are eligible for the PSOB's death benefit, but under current law, the claim must establish that the exposure occurred in the line of duty. Given the insidious nature of this novel coronavirus, this places an unnecessary burden on the claimant.

"This legislation will codify and strengthen the existing guidance from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, which we were able to secure with the help of the President and the Attorney General back in April," said Yoes. "At a time of heightened risk from this pandemic, we believe this legislation is necessary to ensure that these officers and their families, who are not able to 'stay at home' during this crisis, will be taken care of in the event they are disabled and unable to continue to serve as law enforcement officers."

The legislation introduced by Senators Grassley and Booker will establish a statutory presumption that law enforcement or other public safety officers who die or become disabled from COVID-19 or complications related to COVID-19 did so because they sustained a personal injury in the line of duty, provided that the officer engaged in line-of-duty actions between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2021.

The Fraternal Order of Police is the largest law enforcement labor organization in the United States with more than 354,000 members.

--BUILDING ON A PROUD TRADITION--

