



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

PATRICK YOES NATIONAL PRESIDENT

JIM PASCO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

328 Massachusetts Ave NE | Washington DC 20002

(202) 547-8189 | www.fop.net | legislative@fop.net

18 October 2022

The Honorable John F. Reed
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable James M. Inhofe
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Reed and Inhofe,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to respectfully ask that you support retaining the language of H.R. 8142, the “Department of Defense Law Enforcement Credential Act,” which is currently included in the House-passed H.R. 7900, the “National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2023.” We need your help to ensure this provision is included in the final bill to address a critical officer safety issue: the lack of official law enforcement credentials for civilian law enforcement officers employed by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) who protect our military facilities and personnel.

Currently, there are thousands of civilian law enforcement officers around the country who are issued only the DoD Common Access Cards (CAC) without any endorsement or acknowledgement of their law enforcement status. Their official DoD identification is the same as any other DoD employee. For law enforcement officers not to have the proper credentials clearly identifying them as law enforcement raises numerous issues, but the lack of this identification is a critical threat to the safety of these officers.

To provide just one example, there are civilian law enforcement officers with the U.S. Department of the Navy (DoN) assigned to the Philadelphia Naval Base Police Department who are not issued proper credentials that identify them as law enforcement officers. The President of the First Federal Fraternal Order of Police Lodge in Philadelphia relayed to us a potential scenario that was brought to him by one of his members, who is extremely concerned that if he is stopped while driving his vehicle to commute to and from work without the proper credentials, there could be potential trouble—given that he will be in possession of agency-issued police equipment and uniforms. This young officer, who happens to be African American, is concerned that without possessing the proper credentials that he can use to identify himself, as he has no way of verifying his law enforcement status or explaining why he is in possession of these items. As you would imagine, this scenario could be disastrous, to say the least.

The decision by some DoD components or installation commanders to refuse to issue these Federal law enforcement officers the appropriate credentials make it impossible to clearly identify themselves as law enforcement, and ultimately jeopardizes the safety of these officers and their communities. The FOP strongly believes that the DoD should have a uniform policy that all its civilian law enforcement officers have a law enforcement credential.

For this reason, we respectfully request that you include H.R. 8142, the "Department of Defense Law Enforcement Credential Act," remain part of the final National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2023. This legislation would direct the appropriate DoD component agencies and departments to take the necessary steps to ensure that all civilian law enforcement officers within DoD are issued credentials or identification cards that clearly identify them as law enforcement officers at no cost to them. The safety of the men and women who are the first line of defense at all our nation's military bases and installations depends on it.

On behalf of the more than 364,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I want to thank you for considering our request in this urgent matter. If you have any questions or if I can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in our Washington office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Yoes", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Patrick Yoes
National President

cc: The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
The Honorable A. Mitchell McConnell III