



# NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

PATRICK YOES NATIONAL PRESIDENT

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20 January 2023

The Honorable Donald J. Bacon  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Bacon,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our strong support for H.R. 355, the "Back the Blue Act".

Our fellow Americans who choose to be law enforcement officers put their lives on the line for their fellow citizens and the communities that they serve. In recent years, however, they find themselves targeted just because of the uniform that they wear. In 2022, 331 officers were shot in the line of duty, 62 of whom were killed. There were 89 ambush attacks on law enforcement officers, which resulted in 126 officers being shot, 32 of whom were killed.

The bill you have introduced would improve protections for law enforcement officers by increasing the penalties for those who kill or assault law enforcement officers, judges, and other public safety officers. The FOP is particularly supportive of the bill's provision making the murder or attempted murder of a law enforcement officer employed by an agency that receives Federal funds a capital offense. This closes a loophole in current law in which the murder of a State or local law enforcement officer is a capital offense only if that officer was actively serving on a Federal task force, was directly involved in a Federal investigation or came to the aid of a Federal law enforcement officer.

The legislation would also impose time and other substantive limits on Federal courts' review of habeas corpus petitions challenging a State court conviction for killing law enforcement, judges, or other public safety officers.

The bill also amends the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act (LEOSA) by harmonizing State and Federal laws with respect to the Gun-Free Schools Zones Act by treating State-issued concealed carry permit holders and qualified active and retired officers in the same way. It also extends the LEOSA exemption to magazines so that officers are not exposed to legal jeopardy in States that have limitations on the number of rounds or capacity of magazines. The bill would also allow any active or retired law enforcement officer carrying under LEOSA to lawfully access U.S. Post Offices, Social Security Administration Offices, Veterans Affairs Offices, or similar Federal facilities.

Finally, the bill would provide \$20 million in new grants to improve police-community relations, law enforcement training, as well as officer safety and wellness.

On behalf of the more than 364,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I thank you for your leadership on this important issue. If I can provide any additional information about this bill, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in our Washington, D.C. office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Yoes", with a large, stylized initial "P" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Patrick Yoes  
National President