

23 February 2023

The Honorable Elise M. Stefanik

U.S House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Stefanik,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our support for H.R. 304, the “Stop Enabling Repeat Violence and Endangering (SERVE) Our Communities Act.”

Bail reform and similar criminal justice reforms pertaining to juveniles in certain jurisdictions have stripped away judicial oversight by mandating the automatic release of young offenders charged with non-violent crimes. Certain reforms have also encouraged juveniles, some charged with violent crimes, to be sent to family court as opposed to criminal court. While the intent may have been to minimize the impact on vulnerable individuals, these policies have instead created a public safety threat, allowing dangerous criminals on the street.

Your legislation would establish an annual grant program for State and local governments to fund programs like transitional services, mentoring, and job training for young offenders. To be eligible, jurisdictions would need to establish a “dangerous standard” mandate that allows a State court or magistrate to consider the potential danger an individual poses to public safety when determining bail or pretrial release conditions. In addition, jurisdictions would be required to show actions taken towards expanding efforts to hire and retain law enforcement officers and prosecutors, as well as administering a public education program to combat anti-police sentiment and improve community-police relations.

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 assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in our Washington, D.C. office.

Sincerely,

A close up of a basketball hoop

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Patrick Yoes

National President