



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

PATRICK YOES NATIONAL PRESIDENT

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8 August 2023

The Honorable Thomas P. Tiffany
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Tiffany,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to ask you, as a Member who lost two officers to violence in the line of duty, to cosponsor H.R. 743, the "Protect and Serve Act."

On 8 April, Officer Emily Breidenbach of the Chetek Police Department observed a vehicle being operated by an individual with an active warrant for a failure to appear in court on a case of nonpayment of child support. The driver was the subject of an agency alert, so Officer Breidenbach followed the vehicle and called for back-up before making the traffic stop. Officer Hunter T. Scheel of the Cameron Police Department responded and, once he was on the scene, Officer Breidenbach exited her vehicle and ordered the driver to come out with his hands in view.

The driver opened the car door and immediately opened fire with his AR-15 rifle. Officer Breidenbach was able to radio that the driver was armed and fired two rounds before she was killed. Officer Scheel engaged the killer but was shot multiple times and went to the ground. This murderer approached Officer Scheel and executed him with two shots at close range. All of this occurred in less than a minute and the shooter died from his injuries at the scene a few minutes later.

According to the report from the District Attorney of Barron County, this cop-killer "made the conscious, deliberate and premeditated decision to murder two police officers."

In response to the surge of violence targeting law enforcement officers in the form of calculated and ambush-style attacks, like the kind which resulted in deaths of Officers Breidenbach and Scheel, the FOP is urging the House to consider legislation that would make it a Federal crime, in certain limited circumstances, to deliberately target law enforcement officers with violence. In 2018, this same bill passed in the House on an overwhelming 382-35 vote. Your predecessor, Representative Sean Duffy, voted in support of the legislation.

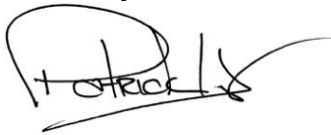
So far this year, 81 officers have been shot in ambush-style attacks and 14 officers, including Officers Breidenbach and Scheel, were killed. This is a stark reminder that our law enforcement officers are not just in harm's way due to the dangerous nature of their profession, but that they are also the targets of violent individuals whose sole motivation is to injure or kill a law enforcement officer.

Ambush-style attacks and violence targeting law enforcement officers have been steadily increasing in recent years. A May 2019 report from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) concluded: "While the overall number of officers who were feloniously killed was declining, the percentage of officers feloniously killed during surprise attacks was increasing."¹ A December 2017 study by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, which examined law enforcement officer fatalities from 2010-2016, found that 20% of ambushed officers were seated in their patrol cars and 56% of officers killed in an ambush were not on a call or engaged in any enforcement activity.²

Considering these chilling facts and the loss of your Officers Breidenbach and Scheel, we are asking you to cosponsor H.R. 743 to address the national problem of ambushes and unprovoked attacks on our nation's law enforcement officers. No officer should be at risk of being targeted while simply sitting in their patrol car, standing post, or heading home at the end of a shift. When a member of the public calls for help, we answer that call. We are asking for your help now and urge you to cosponsor this bill so that we can once again send it to the House floor for a vote.

On behalf of the more than 367,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I thank you for considering the FOP's urgent request to cosponsor H.R. 743. 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

¹ <https://info.publicintelligence.net/FBI-AmbushesUnprovokedAttacks.pdf>

² <https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter/RIC/Publications/cops-w0858-pub.pdf>