



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

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13 February 2024

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rogers
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Frank J. Pallone, Jr.
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Madam Chairman and Representative Pallone,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our strong support for H.R. 2548, the "Public Safety Concussions and Traumatic Brain Injury Health Act," and to ask that the Committee on Energy and Commerce mark up and favorably report the legislation.

Law enforcement officers are in harm's way each and every day. Too many officers suffer physical injuries in the line of duty—whether it's while making an arrest, responding to a car crash, or being attacked by an assailant. While many of the injuries they sustain are identifiable and medically treated, internal injuries like concussions or traumatic brain injury (TBI) may go unnoticed or undiagnosed. Injuries like this can lead to difficulties with memory, concentration, communication, and other serious medical issues. While concussions are usually considered to be a mild traumatic brain injury, even these temporary injuries can take months to heal.

Professional sports teams have protocols to follow when an athlete is subjected to a head-related injury to ensure that concussions or more serious brain injuries are identified and treated. Law enforcement agencies should have similar protocols. Your legislation will help provide agencies with the ability to establish protocols like this by directing the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to expand their current data collection efforts on concussions and TBI to include, and make publicly available, information on these types of injuries incurred by public safety officers. The CDC will then provide recommendations and protocols for identifying, treating, and diagnosing concussions and other serious brain-related injuries received by public safety officers. The bill also directs the CDC to disseminate information to mental health professionals on the connection between concussions and traumatic brain injuries with acute stress disorders and suicidal inclinations, which will provide a greater understanding of the serious implications of officers who have undiagnosed injuries to their brains.

We believe that this is an important first step in addressing the long-term impact on the lives and health that concussions and TBIs have in the public safety community. On behalf of the more than 373,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I thank you both for working with us to develop this legislation and for your ongoing leadership and partnership on so many law enforcement issues. If I can be of any further assistance or provide additional information on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in our Washington, D.C. office.

Sincerely,

Patrick Yoes
National President

cc: Robert Fox, President, New Jersey State Lodge
Marco Montebianco, President, Washington State Lodge