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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

23 July 2024

The Honorable Madeleine Dean
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Brian K. Fitzpatrick
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Dean and Fitzpatrick,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our support for H.R. 3686, the "Stopping Harmful Image Exploitation and Limiting Distribution (SHIELD) Act."

With the ubiquity of smartphones, the ease with which images and videos of an intimate or sexual nature can be collected and shared without consent can allow individuals with malicious intent the means to victimize anyone who appears in these materials. This legislation provides the U.S. Department of Justice with the tools they need to combat the sharing of Non-consensually distributed intimate imagery (NDII) by individuals with access to private, intimate or sexually explicit videos or pictures and who use them to exploit or harass victims that appear in them. Right now, 48 States have enacted laws criminalizing the sharing of NDII materials, but the classification and penalties for the crimes are wildly inconsistent.

Your bill will protect victims from harassment, intimidation, and exploitation by establishing criminal liability for individuals who share NDII materials and as well as addressing the threat of sexual extortion scams, many of which target young people. The SHIELD Act would also ensure that images are not circulated without consent and adjusts existing laws to give prosecutors more power to hold individuals liable.

On behalf of the more than 377,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I thank you both for your leadership on this issue. If I can be of any help or provide additional information in support of this legislation, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in our Washington, D.C. office.

Sincerely,

Patrick Yoes
National President

cc: Joe Regan, President, Pennsylvania State Lodge
John Florill, National Trustee, Pennsylvania State Lodge