



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
1 AUGUST 2022

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Senate Clears Measure on Service-Connected Suicides: The “Public Safety Officer Support Act” Goes to President for Signing

Washington, DC – Patrick Yoes, National President of the Fraternal Order of Police, applauded news that the United States Senate passed H.R. 6943, the “Public Safety Officer Support Act,” by unanimous consent today. The bill will be sent to the President, who is expected to sign the measure into law.

“The FOP was proud to partner with Senators Duckworth and Cornyn on this important bill, which recognizes that most public safety officer suicides are service-connected,” Yoes said. “The families of officers who are lost to suicide suffer the same pain and grief as the family of any other officer lost in the line of duty.”

The bill provides a presumption that any officer who is diagnosed with or seeks help for acute stress disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or another similar mental health condition who commits or attempts to commit suicide is presumed to “constitute personal injury” as defined in the Public Safety Officers’ Benefits program. The bill also recognizes the cumulative and corrosive effects of the mental stress suffered by law enforcement and other public safety officers and applies the same presumption to any public safety officer who responds or responded to a mass casualty, mass death, or mass shooting event.

“Long-term exposure to mental stress and traumatic events throughout their service can inflict ‘invisible injuries’ on the men and women in law enforcement, injuries that may be left untreated and have a fatal outcome,” Yoes said. “These disorders can be just as disabling as a physical injury and an officer who suffers from this or a similar disorder that may result in suicide is just as service-connected as any other line-of-duty death. This bill shows compassion and support for our officers and their families and provides another step towards building support for officers facing mental wellness crises.”

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Founded in 1915, the Fraternal Order of Police is the largest law enforcement organization in the United States, with more than 364,000 members. With national offices in Nashville, Tennessee, and Washington, D.C., the FOP is committed to improving the working conditions of law enforcement officers and the safety of those who serve through education, legislation, information, community involvement, and employee representation. Please visit fop.net for more information.