



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

PATRICK YOES NATIONAL PRESIDENT

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10 August 2023

The Honorable Daniel K. Davis
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Davis,

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

On 6 May, Chicago Police Officer Aréannah Preston drove home after her shift in her uniform—she had made one arrest that day. A crew of four teenagers, who'd spent the earlier part of the day committing a string of robberies and car-jackings, noted her uniform and turned around to follow her. When she reached her home, she was surprised to come under fire from at least two shooters. She was able to return fire, but none of her attackers were hit and she died at the scene. Her firearm was stolen and sold by her attackers. The youngest member of the group, a boy of 16, called a friend to brag that he was part of the crew that killed a police officer.

Officer Preston was a well-respected officer who displayed true empathy and a genuine commitment to making Chicago a better place. When her last arrestee was told what happened, the person broke down in tears. Aréannah was supposed to graduate Loyola University in a week with a Masters in Jurisprudence, but instead, she became a victim of a group of angry teenagers who were looking to kill or injure a police officer.

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 the death of your Officer Preston, 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. You voted for the bill on the House floor.

So far this year, 81 officers have been shot in ambush-style attacks and 14 officers, including your Aréannah Preston, 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 Officer Aréanah Preston, 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, sweeping flourish 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>