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NATIONAL  
FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

328 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., N.E.  
WASHINGTON, DC 20002  
PHONE 202-547-8189 • FAX 202-547-8190

CHUCK CANTERBURY  
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

JAMES O. PASCO, JR.  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

18 March 2016

The Honorable Kenneth R. Buck  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Buck,

I am writing on the behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our strong support for H.R. 4760, the “Blue Lives Matter Act.” The FOP has been calling on Congress since 2014 to introduce hate crimes legislation to protect police. Your legislation will extend greater protections to law enforcement officers by expanding the Federal hate crime statute to include law enforcement officers.

Under current law, persons who deliberately victimize another person because of the race, color, creed, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability are subject to greater penalties. This expansion passed in 2009 with bipartisan support because Congress saw a need to expand the law to protect a group of our fellow citizens whom we suspected were being targeted as victims of violence and intimidation. In addition to increased criminal penalties, the law required the U.S. Department of Justice to collect data on these crimes so that we in law enforcement can do a better job of deterring and preventing them.

Now Americans who choose to be law enforcement officers, who choose to serve their communities and put their lives on the line for their fellow citizens, find themselves hunted and targeted just because of the uniform they wear.

Of the 47 deaths by gunfire suffered by law enforcement in 2014, nine of them—that’s 19%—were ambush killings. These were deliberate and sadly successful efforts by individuals who set out to kill a police officer. The last two and half months of 2015 saw 46 officers shot in the line of duty and 16 of those lost their lives. This year, 61 law enforcement officers have been shot and 13 of which were killed:

- Last June, a gunman armed with assault weapons and explosives used an armored car to get close to the headquarters of the Dallas Police Department and opened fire in an effort to kill law enforcement officers.
- Officer Thomas W. Cottrell, Jr. of the Danville Police Department in Ohio was shot and killed in an ambush attack by a man who told his ex-girlfriend that he intended to kill a law enforcement officer.

— BUILDING ON A PROUD TRADITION —

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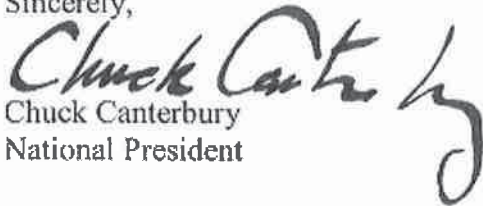
- Officer Douglas S. Barney of the Unified Police Department of Greater Salt Lake in Utah was responding to the scene of a car crash when one of the drivers, a man with an extensive criminal background and active Federal and State warrants, shot and killed him. The shooter wounded another officer before being killed by responding officers.
- Officer Jason Moszer of the Fargo Police Department in North Dakota responded to a domestic violence disturbance call. A man, armed with multiple long guns, called dispatchers after barricading himself inside of his home and told them he was going to shoot at officers. He shot and killed Officer Moszer from his barricade.

Ambush attacks and incidents of multiple deaths or injuries at the same scene are on the rise. Those in our profession have always been in harm's way. It is our job to protect others but it should not be "part of the job" to be a target of a hate-fueled assassin who is looking simply to kill a cop. We do not accept that our uniforms alone make us targets because someone was driven to rage over a perceived injustice or desires to strike a blow against our civil government.

This is a critical officer safety issue and we strongly believe that Congress should act quickly and pass this important change to Federal hate crimes law. We look forward to continuing to work closely with you and your staff to ensure this bill receives full consideration and ultimately passes on the House floor.

On behalf of the more than 330,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I want to thank you for the introduction of this legislation. If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in my Washington Office.

Sincerely,



Chuck Canterbury  
National President