



## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

*Representing America's Finest*

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**Executive Director and**

**General Counsel**

March 19, 2015

The Honorable Richard C. Shelby  
Chairman

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related Agencies  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
142 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski  
Ranking Member

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related Agencies  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
125 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Shelby and Ranking Member Mikulski:

On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), I am writing to you to thank you for your leadership and past support of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) Program, and respectfully request that you include a standalone funding level of \$50,000,000 (its fully authorized amount) for the BVP Program.

The BVP Program is a critical resource for state and local jurisdictions. This program has issued more than one million lifesaving vests to 13,000 state and local law enforcement agencies throughout the country since it was established in 1999. However, while many officers are protected by bullet-resistant armor, an alarming number of officers, many in small departments across the United States, are not afforded this same protection due to local budget constraints.

With state and local law enforcement already struggling under significant budget constraints, and the demand for vests as high as ever, it is imperative that Congress continue to invest in this lifesaving program.

Law enforcement officers risk their lives each and every day to keep our communities safe. They operate in extremely dangerous environments, during a time when individuals are increasingly willing to attack law enforcement officers. In the past several months, there has been a marked increase in attacks against law enforcement officers. This month, a police officer in Atlanta was killed in an ambush style attack; two Los Angeles police officers were targeted and wounded by gunfire while patrolling the streets; and two police officers were shot and injured while standing guard outside of a Ferguson, Missouri police station. In February, a Minneapolis police officer was shot in his patrol car and an officer for the city of Highland Park in Michigan was shot and killed. We also lost two New York City Police Department officers in December 2014, who were assassinated by an individual determined to kill law enforcement officers

The examples noted above are only a small fraction of the number of officers who have been attacked or killed by individuals who are determined to harm law

enforcement officers. These cases show how vital the BVP Program is to law enforcement departments across the United States. We cannot expect our officers to work in these dangerous environments without the basic protection of a bulletproof vest.

These brave men and women must be protected with the proper equipment. Funding the BVP Program at its full level of \$50,000,000 will ensure that officers are provided with necessary protection as they work tirelessly to protect our communities.

We urge you to fully fund this program at its authorized level of \$50,000,000 annually.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at: (703) 549-0775.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William J. Johnson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William J. Johnson  
Executive Director

