



The Washington Report

The Newsletter of the National Association of Police Organizations

Representing America's Finest

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NAPO VICTORY!!!

Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program Reauthorization Act Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu National Blue Alert Act Passed by Senate Judiciary Committee

This afternoon, the Senate Judiciary Committee passed the Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) Grant Program Reauthorization Act and the Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu National Blue Alert Act on a voice vote. NAPO has expended all available efforts to garner support for these critical pieces of legislation. Our efforts led to both bills being reported out of Committee.

The BVP Grant Program Reauthorization Act reauthorizes the highly successful BVP Grant Program and ensures that all of America's law enforcement officers are provided with the life-saving protection they need. The BVP Grant 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. NAPO has worked closely with the bill's sponsors, **Senators Patrick Leahy (D-VT)** and **Lindsey Graham (R-SC)**, to garner support for this legislation to ensure that all law enforcement officers are protected with bullet resistant armor.

The Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu National Blue Alert Act will assist with the establishment of a nationwide Blue Alert system to apprehend violent criminals who have injured or killed police officers or who have made an imminent or credible threat to cause serious injury or death of a law enforcement officer. This bill is named in honor of two New York City Police Detectives, and NAPO members, who were assassinated while sitting in their police patrol car in December 2014. Their killer posted threats to law enforcement on social media before the attack. Implementing a nationwide Blue Alert system will help to ensure that information on credible threats, like those posted by the individual who killed Detectives Ramos and Liu, is widely disseminated so that officers have advanced warning, and can apprehend the criminal before he or she can do more harm.

NAPO has worked closely with the Blue Alert bill's sponsors, **Senators Ben Cardin (D-MD)** and **Lindsey Graham (R-SC)** to garner support for this legislation. NAPO's Executive Director, Bill Johnson, participated in a press conference with Senator Cardin and the House bill's sponsors, **Congressmen Dave Reichert (R-WA)** and **Bill Pascrell (D-NJ)**, on March 24, 2015, to bring attention to the importance of this legislation.

In addition to the press conference, NAPO has spent countless hours engaging staffers for key members of the Senate Judiciary Committee to garner support for both of these bills. We are thrilled that our efforts were successful, and we're looking forward to working with you to pass both pieces of legislation during this Congress.

If you have any questions about the BVP Grant Program Reauthorization Act or the Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu National Blue Alert Act, please contact Melissa Nee at: mnee@napo.org.