



International Association of Fire Chiefs

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May 9, 2019

The Honorable Joe Courtney
U.S. House of Representatives
2348 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Courtney:

On behalf of the approximately 12,000 members of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, I thank you for introducing the Fire Police Fairness Act. This bill would allow fire police to become eligible for the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB). The IAFC is proud to endorse this legislation, because it recognizes the hazardous service of Americans who volunteer to serve their communities.

Fire police frequently serve with rural career, volunteer, and combination fire departments. They are volunteers who help direct traffic and provide scene security during traffic incidents and public gatherings. It is not uncommon for fire police officers to put their lives at risk by directing traffic at night or in inclement weather as firefighters provide lifesaving aid to motorists involved in car accidents.

Congress created the PSOB program to provide aid to the families of fallen public safety officers or public safety officers disabled in the line of duty. The PSOB program provides a one-time death or disability benefit to the family, along with tuition assistance for college. While not making up for the loss of a loved one, the PSOB program is the nation's way of thanking families for the sacrifices that they bear for their communities. Unfortunately, fire police are not eligible for PSOB benefits due to a quirk in the law.

The IAFC is grateful that your legislation would resolve this problem and would allow fire police to become eligible for the PSOB program. We are glad to endorse this bill and look forward to working with you to pass this legislation in the House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Dan Eggleston", is positioned above the printed name.

Fire Chief Dan Eggleston, EFO, CFO, CMO
President and Chairman of the Board

: kpl