



SERGEANTS BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION

POLICE DEPARTMENT, CITY OF NEW YORK

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October 8, 2015

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CITY-WIDE SECRETARY

The Honorable Patrick J. Toomey
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Toomey & Sessions,

I am writing on behalf of the more than 13,000 active and retired members of the Sergeants Benevolent Association of the New York City Police Department (NYPD) to advise you of our strong support for S. 2034, the "Thin Blue Line Act."

For too long, members of the NYPD, along with law enforcement officers across this nation, have been targets. There has been a proliferation of groups and pundits impugning the motives and mission of law enforcement. They do so with no regard for the impact it has on our ability to protect life, property, and the freedoms we all hold dear. These constant attacks and the excessive, exaggerated rhetoric they use have led some to declare an open season on police officers, and to welcome with cheers and praise the cowardly criminals who target law enforcement officers with acts of violence. We saw this first hand in New York City last December 20, when Officers Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos were ambushed and senselessly murdered as they sat in their radio car on a Brooklyn street corner. Unfortunately, they are not alone. According to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, 15 officers were shot and killed in ambush-style attacks last year, which constituted the single most common category of fatal shootings of officers in 2014.

It is for these reasons and many others that the legislation you have introduced is so important. The "Thin Blue Line Act" would make the murder or targeting of police officers, prosecutors, firefighters, and other first responders at any level of government an aggravating factor in federal death penalty determinations. The bill applies to things like the interstate homicide of an officer, and is applicable whether the officer is murdered on duty, because of the performance of their duty, or because of their status as a public official. While we know that law enforcement officers will continue to be targets, regardless of their uniform and whether they are on duty or off, active or retired, this legislation sends the message that any action to target law enforcement officers for murder or violence will be met with the harshest of penalties. And that is a message that is long overdue.

On behalf of the membership of our organization, thank you both for your leadership on this important issue. We look forward to working with you to see it swiftly enacted into law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ed Mullins". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Ed Mullins
President