

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 2, 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:

Thank you for your leadership and past support of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership program. As you begin work on the Subcommittee's appropriations legislation for Fiscal Year 2016, we respectfully request that you include a standalone funding level of \$30,000,000 for the Bulletproof Vest program.

According to the Government Accountability Office, bulletproof vests have saved the lives of more than 3,000 law enforcement officers since 1987. The Bulletproof Vest Partnership has helped law enforcement officers in 13,000 jurisdictions purchase nearly 1.2 million lifesaving vests that their departments would not be able to afford otherwise.

In recent years, demand for bulletproof vests has been out pacing funding for the program. In 2014, the program was able to reimburse small jurisdictions less than half of their total request, and no funding was available for hundreds of eligible large jurisdictions. 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. Our support is critical to ensuring that both large and small jurisdictions can participate in a program that truly protects those who risk their lives for our safety every day.

Our request is supported by the Fraternal Order of the Police, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Sheriffs' Association, the Major County Sheriffs' Association, the Major Cities Chiefs Police Association, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the National Tactical Officers Association, and the Sergeants Benevolent Association.

Bulletproof vests remain one of the primary forms of defense for our uniformed officers. No officer should have to serve without one. As you weigh priorities for the upcoming fiscal year, we urge you to consider the proven lifesaving effectiveness of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership program.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your leadership on this important matter.

Sincerely,



SHERROD BROWN
United States Senator



PATRICK LEAHY
United States Senator



KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND
United States Senator



BENJAMIN L. CARDIN
United States Senator



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United States Senator



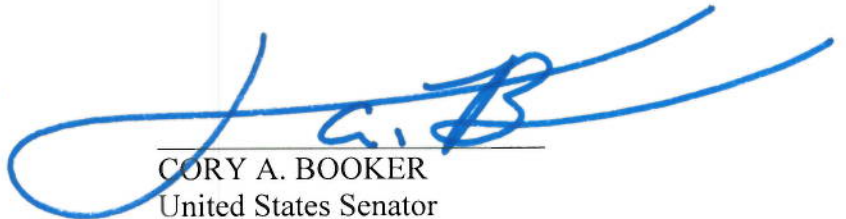
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United States Senator



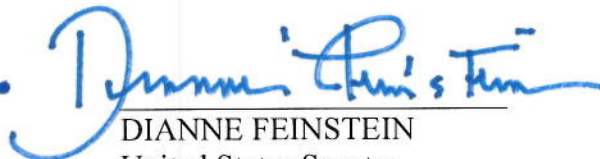
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