



International Association of
Chiefs of Police

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January 8, 2015

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
United States Senate
437 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
United States Senate
290 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Leahy and Graham:

On behalf of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), I am writing to express our strong support for the *Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program Reauthorization Act of 2015*. This bill would reauthorize through Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 the Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) Grant Program, an extremely valuable program that has assisted many law enforcement agencies in purchasing bulletproof vests for their officers.

Since its inception, the BVP Grant Program has been a critical resource for state and local law enforcement and has enabled the purchase of more than a million vests for law enforcement officers throughout the United States. According to the Bureau of Justice Assistance, in FY 2012 protective vests were directly attributable to saving the lives of at least 33 law enforcement and corrections officers in 20 different states.

To give you a sense of how important this program is to law enforcement, in FY 2013 the BVP program received a total of 4,580 applications from small jurisdictions alone, which are characterized as having a population of under 100,000 under this program. Funding small jurisdictions under the BVP grant program is a program priority requirement. This meant that in FY 2013 none of the 502 large jurisdiction applicants (populations of over 100,000) were awarded funding in FY 2013. In addition to not having enough funds in FY 2013 to provide awards to any of the large jurisdiction applicants, there were insufficient funds to provide even the maximum 50% to all small jurisdiction applicants. Small jurisdictions that applied received only 37.10% of the amount they requested on their applications.

The IACP is also very supportive of the bill's requirement that all grantees comply with the mandatory wear policy that requires all uniformed patrol officers to wear an armored vest or body armor.

On behalf of our nation's law enforcement executives, we applaud you for introducing this important legislation. The IACP stands ready to assist you as we continue to work together on issues important to the law enforcement field and our communities.

Sincerely,

Chief Richard Beary
President