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(Original Signature of Member)

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R.

To amend the Ominbus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to authorize public safety officer death benefits to officers suffering from post traumatic stress disorder, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. TRONE introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend the Ominbus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to authorize public safety officer death benefits to officers suffering from post traumatic stress disorder, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Public Safety Officer
5 Support Act of 2020”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Every day, public safety officers, including
2 police officers, firefighters, emergency medical tech-
3 nicians, and others, work to maintain the safety,
4 health, and well-being of the communities they serve.

5 (2) From time to time this means being called
6 to respond to stressful and potentially traumatic sit-
7 uations, sometimes even putting their own lives in
8 danger.

9 (3) This work not only puts them at risk for ex-
10 perencing harm, serious injury, and severe trauma,
11 but also places them at up to 25.6 times higher risk
12 for developing post-traumatic stress disorder when
13 compared to those without such experiences.

14 (4) Psychological evidence indicates law en-
15 forcement officers experience significant job-related
16 stressors and exposures that may confer increased
17 risk for mental health morbidities (for example
18 posttraumatic stress disorder, and suicidal thoughts
19 and behaviors), and hastened mortality.

20 (5) Public safety officers often do not have the
21 resources or support they need, leaving them at
22 higher risk for long-term mental health con-
23 sequences.

24 (6) In 2017, the Department of Justice ap-
25 proved 481 Public Safety Officer Benefit (PSOB)

1 claims, but not one of them for the over 240 public
2 safety officers who died by suicide that year.

3 (7) As it currently stands, officers who have
4 died or are disabled as a result of suicide or post-
5 traumatic stress disorder do not qualify for this pro-
6 gram, despite officers being more likely to die by
7 suicide than in the line of duty.

8 **SEC. 3. PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER DEATH BENEFITS FOR**
9 **POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER.**

10 Section 1201 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe
11 Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10281) is amended by
12 adding at the end the following:

13 “(o) As determined by the Bureau—

14 “(1) post traumatic stress disorder suffered by
15 a public safety officer, and diagnosed by a licensed
16 medical or mental health professional, shall be pre-
17 sumed to constitute a personal injury within the
18 meaning of subsection (a), sustained in the line of
19 duty by the officer, if the officer, while on duty, en-
20 engages in situations involving stressful, tenuous, or
21 traumatic law enforcement, fire suppression, rescue,
22 hazardous material response, emergency medical
23 services (including responding to opioid overdoses, or
24 traumatic psychological or psychiatric distress calls),

1 prison security, disaster relief, or other emergency
2 response activity; and

3 “(2) in the case that a public safety officer de-
4 scribed in paragraph (1) dies by suicide or is totally
5 and permanently disabled from engaging or partici-
6 pating as described in paragraph (1), such death or
7 disability shall be presumed to be a direct and proxi-
8 mate result of such engagement or participation,
9 unless competent psychological or medical evidence estab-
10 lishes that the post traumatic stress disorder was unre-
11 lated to the engagement or participation or was directly
12 and proximately caused by something other than the mere
13 presence of post traumatic stress disorder risk factors.”.

14 **SEC. 4. GAO REPORT.**

15 On the date that is one year after the date of the
16 enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the
17 United States shall submit to Congress a report on bene-
18 fits issued pursuant to subsection (o) of section 1201 of
19 the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968
20 (34 U.S.C. 10281), as added by this Act, and any rec-
21 ommendations to improve the such subsection.