

S 2944

Public Safety Officers' Benefits Improvement Act of 2016

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Crime and Law Enforcement

Introduced: May 18, 2016

Current Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations.

Latest Action: Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations. (Dec 22, 2016)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/2944>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Grassley, Chuck [R-IA]

Party: Republican • **State:** IA • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (6 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Gillibrand, Kirsten E. [D-NY]	D · NY		May 18, 2016
Sen. Blunt, Roy [R-MO]	R · MO		May 26, 2016
Sen. Hatch, Orrin G. [R-UT]	R · UT		May 26, 2016
Sen. Coons, Christopher A. [D-DE]	D · DE		Jun 6, 2016
Sen. Schumer, Charles E. [D-NY]	D · NY		Jun 6, 2016
Sen. Ayotte, Kelly [R-NH]	R · NH		Sep 6, 2016

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Judiciary Committee	Senate	Reported By	Jun 10, 2016
Judiciary Committee	House	Referred to	Dec 22, 2016

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Crime and Law Enforcement

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
114 HR 5743	Related bill	Jul 27, 2016: Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations.

Public Safety Officers' Benefits Improvement Act of 2016

(Sec. 2) This bill amends the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to revise requirements for the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) program. (The PSOB program provides death, disability, and education benefits to public safety officers and survivors of public safety officers who are killed or injured in the line of duty.)

It authorizes the Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to establish PSOB program rules, regulations, and procedures based on standards developed by another federal agency.

In determining a claimant's eligibility for death or disability benefits, the BJA must give substantial weight to evidence and facts presented by a state, local, or federal agency.

The BJA must also publish and update information on pending claims and report to Congress on submitted claims for death, disability, and educational benefits.

(Sec. 3) This section extends the age limitation for a PSOB claim for death, disability, or education benefits that is approved more than one year after the date on which it was filed.

(Sec. 4) The BJA must attempt to obtain necessary documentation to determine a claimant's eligibility for death, disability, or education benefits. If it cannot determine eligibility due to a lack of documentation from a third party (e.g., a public agency), then the BJA may abandon the claim only after it utilizes investigative tools, including subpoenas, to obtain the information.

(Sec. 5) The bill establishes a rebuttable presumption that a public safety officer acted properly at the time of injury or death and that no specified limitation (e.g., voluntary intoxication at the time of injury or death) bars the payment of death or disability benefits. The BJA may rebut the presumption by clear and convincing evidence to the contrary.

(Sec. 6) This bill's provisions apply to a claim that is pending on or submitted on or after enactment.

Actions Timeline

- **Dec 22, 2016:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations.
- **Nov 30, 2016:** Message on Senate action sent to the House.
- **Nov 30, 2016:** Received in the House.
- **Nov 30, 2016:** Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary.
- **Nov 29, 2016:** Measure laid before Senate by unanimous consent. (consideration: CR S6571-6573; text of measure as reported in Senate: CR S6571-6572)
- **Nov 29, 2016:** The committee amendments withdrawn by Unanimous Consent. (consideration: CR S6573)
- **Nov 29, 2016:** Passed/agreed to in Senate: Passed Senate with an amendment and an amendment to the Title by Unanimous Consent.
- **Nov 29, 2016:** Passed Senate with an amendment and an amendment to the Title by Unanimous Consent.
- **Jun 9, 2016:** Committee on the Judiciary. Ordered to be reported with amendments favorably.
- **Jun 9, 2016:** Committee on the Judiciary. Reported by Senator Grassley with amendments. Without written report.
- **Jun 9, 2016:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 513.
- **May 18, 2016:** Introduced in Senate
- **May 18, 2016:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. (Sponsor introductory remarks on measure: CR S2976-2977)

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