S 419

Public Safety Officers' Benefits Improvement Act of 2017

Congress: 115 (2017–2019, Ended)
Chamber: Senate
Policy Area: Crime and Law Enforcement
Introduced: Feb 16, 2017
Current Status: Committee on the Judiciary. Hearings held.
Latest Action: Committee on the Judiciary. Hearings held. (Jan 17, 2018)
Law: 115-36 (Enacted Jan 17, 2018)
Official Text: https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/419

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Grassley, Chuck [R-IA]
Party: Republican • **State:** IA • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (16 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Coons, Christopher A. [D-DE]	D · DE		Feb 16, 2017
Sen. Gillibrand, Kirsten E. [D-NY]	D · NY		Feb 16, 2017
Sen. Hatch, Orrin G. [R-UT]	R · UT		Feb 16, 2017
Sen. Blumenthal, Richard [D-CT]	D · CT		Mar 9, 2017
Sen. Blunt, Roy [R-MO]	R · MO		Mar 9, 2017
Sen. Durbin, Richard J. [D-IL]	D · IL		Mar 9, 2017
Sen. Feinstein, Dianne [D-CA]	D · CA		Mar 9, 2017
Sen. Franken, Al [D-MN]	D · MN		Mar 9, 2017
Sen. Hirono, Mazie K. [D-HI]	D · HI		Mar 9, 2017
Sen. Klobuchar, Amy [D-MN]	D · MN		Mar 9, 2017
Sen. Leahy, Patrick J. [D-VT]	D · VT		Mar 9, 2017
Sen. Whitehouse, Sheldon [D-RI]	D · RI		Mar 9, 2017
Sen. Cornyn, John [R-TX]	R · TX		May 4, 2017
Sen. Cruz, Ted [R-TX]	R · TX		May 4, 2017
Sen. Kennedy, John [R-LA]	R · LA		May 4, 2017
Sen. Tillis, Thomas [R-NC]	R · NC		May 4, 2017

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Judiciary Committee	Senate	Hearings By (full committee)	Jan 17, 2018

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Crime and Law Enforcement

Related Bills

No related bills are listed.

Summary (as of Jun 2, 2017)

(This measure has not been amended since it was passed by the Senate on May 16, 2017. The summary of that version is repeated here.)

Public Safety Officers' Benefits Improvement Act of 2017

(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. If a state, local, or federal agency provides a certification of facts regarding eligibility for death or disability benefits, then BJA must adopt the factual findings, if they are supported by substantial evidence.

The BJA must also publish and update information on pending claims and 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), and such information is not readily available to the claimant, 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 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 must not determine that a limitation applies, absent clear and convincing evidence.

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

Actions Timeline

- **Jan 17, 2018:** Committee on the Judiciary. Hearings held.
- **Jun 2, 2017:** Signed by President.
- **Jun 2, 2017:** Became Public Law No: 115-36.
- **May 22, 2017:** Presented to President.
- **May 17, 2017:** Message on Senate action sent to the House.
- **May 17, 2017:** Received in the House.
- **May 17, 2017:** Held at the desk.
- **May 17, 2017:** Mr. Goodlatte moved to suspend the rules and pass the bill.
- **May 17, 2017:** Considered under suspension of the rules. (consideration: CR H4248-4251)
- **May 17, 2017:** DEBATE - The House proceeded with forty minutes of debate on S. 419.
- **May 17, 2017:** Passed/agreed to in House: On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill Agreed to by voice vote.(text: CR H4248-4249)
- **May 17, 2017:** On motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill Agreed to by voice vote. (text: CR H4248-4249)
- **May 17, 2017:** Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection.
- **May 16, 2017:** Measure laid before Senate by unanimous consent. (consideration: CR S2954)
- **May 16, 2017:** Passed/agreed to in Senate: Passed Senate with an amendment by Unanimous Consent.
- **May 16, 2017:** Passed Senate with an amendment by Unanimous Consent.
- **Mar 9, 2017:** Committee on the Judiciary. Ordered to be reported without amendment favorably.
- **Mar 9, 2017:** Committee on the Judiciary. Reported by Senator Grassley without amendment. Without written report.
- **Mar 9, 2017:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 10.
- **Feb 16, 2017:** Introduced in Senate
- **Feb 16, 2017:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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