

S 1208

Protecting America's First Responders Act

Congress: 116 (2019–2021, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Crime and Law Enforcement

Introduced: Apr 11, 2019

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

Latest Action: Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security. (May 31, 2019)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/1208>

Sponsor

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

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

Cosponsors (15 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Gillibrand, Kirsten E. [D-NY]	D · NY		Apr 11, 2019
Sen. Blumenthal, Richard [D-CT]	D · CT		May 1, 2019
Sen. Tester, Jon [D-MT]	D · MT		May 7, 2019
Sen. Cramer, Kevin [R-ND]	R · ND		May 8, 2019
Sen. Klobuchar, Amy [D-MN]	D · MN		May 8, 2019
Sen. Blackburn, Marsha [R-TN]	R · TN		May 13, 2019
Sen. Coons, Christopher A. [D-DE]	D · DE		May 13, 2019
Sen. Cruz, Ted [R-TX]	R · TX		May 13, 2019
Sen. Daines, Steve [R-MT]	R · MT		May 13, 2019
Sen. Durbin, Richard J. [D-IL]	D · IL		May 13, 2019
Sen. Hirono, Mazie K. [D-HI]	D · HI		May 13, 2019
Sen. Leahy, Patrick J. [D-VT]	D · VT		May 13, 2019
Sen. Tillis, Thomas [R-NC]	R · NC		May 13, 2019
Sen. Whitehouse, Sheldon [D-RI]	D · RI		May 13, 2019
Sen. Crapo, Mike [R-ID]	R · ID		May 14, 2019

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Judiciary Committee	Senate	Reported By	May 13, 2019
Judiciary Committee	House	Referred to	May 31, 2019

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Crime and Law Enforcement

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
116 HR 2709	Related bill	Jun 26, 2019: Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security.
116 HR 2812	Related bill	Jun 26, 2019: Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security.

Summary (as of May 16, 2019)

Protecting America's First Responders Act

This bill revises the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program. The program provides disability benefits to public safety officers who are injured in the line of duty and provides death and education benefits to survivors of public safety officers who are killed in the line of duty.

Specifically, the bill revises the payment amount of disability benefits for claims pending for more than one year. The amount must be based on the date of the adjudication of such claim rather than the date of the injury. The bill also increases the interim benefit payment amount and adjusts it based on the Consumer Price Index.

Additionally, the payment amount of death benefits must be the greater of (1) the amount payable as of the date of the public safety officer's death, or (2) the amount payable based on the date of the adjudication of the claim. Currently, such amount is based only on the date of death.

Next, the bill includes within the definition of *firefighter* for purposes of benefits an individual whose primary duty during an emergency response is to secure the scene or manage traffic.

Further, the bill allows applicants who were denied benefits in the previous three years to reapply for benefits.

The Bureau of Justice Assistance of the Department of Justice (DOJ) must use all available investigative tools, including subpoenas, to (1) expedite the processing of a claimant's eligibility for a death, disability, or education benefit; and (2) obtain necessary information from third parties (e.g., public agencies).

DOJ must provide retroactive educational assistance to eligible survivors of public safety officers.

In addition, DOJ must collect data on law enforcement officers who were killed or permanently disabled while on duty.

The Government Accountability Office must report on the average medical costs incurred by a disabled law enforcement officer over the officer's lifetime.

Actions Timeline

- **May 31, 2019:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security.
- **May 16, 2019:** Passed/agreed to in Senate: Passed Senate with an amendment by Voice Vote.(consideration: CR S2893-2895; text: CR 5/20/2019 S2981-2982)
- **May 16, 2019:** Passed Senate with an amendment by Voice Vote. (consideration: CR S2893-2895; text: CR 5/20/2019 S2981-2982)
- **May 16, 2019:** Received in the House.
- **May 16, 2019:** Message on Senate action sent to the House.
- **May 16, 2019:** Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary.
- **May 13, 2019:** Committee on the Judiciary. Reported by Senator Graham with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. Without written report.
- **May 13, 2019:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 83.
- **May 9, 2019:** Committee on the Judiciary. Ordered to be reported with an amendment in the nature of a substitute favorably.
- **Apr 11, 2019:** Introduced in Senate
- **Apr 11, 2019:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.