

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 29, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I have today signed into law H.R. 366, the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Act of 1976.

This law establishes a new program providing for the payment by the Federal government of a \$50,000 death benefit to the survivors of any State or local public safety officer who loses her or his life as a result of injuries sustained in the line of duty.

I fully recognize that no amount of money can fill the void left when these brave officers make the supreme sacrifice in pursuit of their duties. The least the Federal government can do is to assure that their dependents have adequate financial assistance to see them through their difficulties.

The signing into law of this bill is a solemn action by a grateful people and their government. It demonstrates the esteem of a free society for those of its members entrusted with public safety.

While it is important that the survivors of public safety officers who die in the line of duty be provided for, it is infinitely more important that steps be taken to avoid unnecessary death or injury to those who protect our safety. This is why I have pledged that a top priority during the first 100 days of my next Administration will be devoted to rallying the American people behind the legislative proposals I have submitted to the Congress so that the Federal government may better do its part to reduce crime in the United States.

It is with great pride and pleasure that I have signed this act into law.

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