



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE

PATRICK YOES NATIONAL PRESIDENT

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12 June 2023

The Honorable Glenn W. "GT" Thompson Jr.
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Matthew A. Cartwright
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Thompson and Cartwright,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our support for your bill, H.R. 3449, "Eric's Law."

"Eric's Law" is named in honor of fallen Federal Bureau of Prisons Correctional Officer Eric Williams. In February 2013, Officer Williams was viciously murdered in the line of duty by a violent gang assassin and an inmate at a Federal prison in Wayne County, Pennsylvania. The prisoner ambushed Officer Williams stabbed him over 200 times with prison-made weapons and beat him savagely enough to crush his skull. At the time of the murder, the inmate was already serving a life sentence for first-degree murder and an 11-year sentence for his role in gang-related drug trafficking. A Federal jury swiftly convicted the inmate and prosecutors sought the death penalty.

Under current Federal law, the murder of a Federal law enforcement officer is a capital offense. However, if the officer's killer is found guilty of murder and the Federal prosecutor seeks the death penalty in the sentencing phase, the jury must consider and vote on whether to impose it. Unfortunately, the decision of the jury must be unanimous—a single dissenting juror can prevent justice from being served, which is exactly what happened in the case against Officer Williams' killer.

Your bill will amend the current law to allow Federal prosecutors to impanel a second jury for the sentencing phase of a Federal capital case if the first jury does not reach a unanimous decision on the sentence.

When justice is not served in the murder of a Federal law enforcement officer, it sends a message throughout the ranks of law enforcement that their sacrifice, up to and including the loss of their own life, is meaningless. At a time when law enforcement officers are being targeted with violence, I believe it is important that our nation's law enforcement officers have confidence that our criminal justice system will deliver justice to those who kill our officers. The bill you have proposed will do this.

On behalf of the more than 367,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, thank you both for your leadership on this issue. If I can be of any further assistance in moving this legislation forward, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in our Washington, D.C. office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Yoes", with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

Patrick Yoes
National President