

# FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

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## FLEOA HAILS INTRODUCTION OF U.S. PROBATION OFFICER PROTECTION ACT

(Washington, D.C.) – Today Nathan Catura, National President of the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association (FLEOA), praised the introduction of legislation in the House and Senate to enhance the safety of frontline U.S. Probation Officers.

The bill, entitled the “Probation Officer Protection Act” and sponsored by Senate Judiciary Committee leaders Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and House Law Enforcement Caucus Co-Chairs Dave Reichert (R-WA) and Bill Pascrell (D-NJ), would enhance the arrest authority of Probation Officers to cover any hostile individual who assaults, threatens, or obstructs a Probation Officer in the performance of their official duties.

Under 18 U.S.C. 111, it is already a federal crime for any individual to forcibly assault, resist, oppose, intimidate, or interfere with a federal officer in the performance of their official duties. U.S. Probation Officers currently possess the statutory authority to arrest or apprehend an individual who is on probation and under supervision for a violation of this statute. Due to a wrinkle in the law, however, this authority does not extend to third parties who may be present and become violent at the location where the Probation Officer is carrying out their duties to perform a court-ordered search, serve a warrant for arrest, or conducting regular supervision of an individual on probation. When Probation Officers are accosted by a violent third party, they are currently forced to retreat due to their lack of authority. This places Probation Officers at an unnecessary risk, and is why many states have granted their probation officers the authority to arrest third parties and prevent them from interfering with officers’ duties.

“For far too long, the authority of U.S. Probation Officers has been fatally flawed and puts at risk these law enforcement professionals that often deal with the most violent criminals,” Catura said. “That is why FLEOA greatly appreciates the leadership shown by Senators Hatch and Feinstein and Reps. Reichert and Pascrell in support of these brave men and women and in seeking to close this potentially fatal loophole in their authority.”

The “Probation Officers Protection Act” represents an enhancement of U.S. Probation Officers’ existing authority, placing them on par with their state and local counterparts. That is why this enhancement has received the endorsement of the Chiefs Advisory Group to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, the Judicial Conference of the

United States, and the Federal Probation and Pretrial Services Officers Association.

“As we have seen in numerous instances over the past several months, the risks to law enforcement have never been higher, and there are far too many on the federal, state, and local level who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty this year alone,” said Catura. “One of the ways that we can address the rise in violent assaults is to ensure that law enforcement officers have all the tools necessary to protect their own safety and that of the public they serve. It is for these reasons that the ‘Probation Officers Protection Act’ is a legislative priority for FLEOA.”

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*The Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association ([www.fleoa.org](http://www.fleoa.org)) is the largest nonprofit, nonpartisan professional association that exclusively represents over 26,000 active and retired federal law enforcement officers from over 65 Agencies.*