

FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

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July 24, 2017

Chairman Trey Gowdy
House of Representatives
Oversight and Government Reform Committee
Washington D.C.

Ranking Member Elijah Cummings
House of Representatives
Oversight and Government Reform Committee
Washington D.C.

Chairman Gowdy and Ranking Member Cummings,

The Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association (www.fleoa.org) is the largest non-partisan, non-profit professional association representing federal law enforcement. FLEOA has over 26,000 active members nationwide, representing federal law enforcement officers from all 65 federal agencies. This includes U.S. Capitol Police Officers like Special Agents David Bailey and Crystal Griner, who were lauded as heroes by Members of Congress for stopping the fatal attack during the Congressional baseball practice in Alexandria, Virginia. Agents Bailey and Griner's quick actions stopped an assassination attempt against Republican Members of Congress. After that attack, Speaker Paul Ryan said, "I expressed our profound gratitude to them. It is clear to me, based on various eyewitness accounts, that without these two heroes, Agent Bailey and Agent Griner, many lives would have been lost," including Majority Whip Steve Scalise, who is still recovering from his injuries.

These sentiments stand in stark contrast to other recent news headlines, such as *Government Executive's*, "House GOP Takes Cue From Trump, Targets Federal Retirement." This focus on diminishing the federal law enforcement retirement system is, of course, concerning to every federal law enforcement officer.

When federal law enforcement officers answer the call across our nation every day, they do so with the knowledge that their pay and benefits have been protected by the federal retirement system. In choosing a career in federal law enforcement, federal law enforcement officers are often forgoing other, higher-paying careers in the process, protecting the innocent -- including our nation's leaders and countless others -- on a daily basis.

The most recent iteration of the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) has long offered a three-tiered system, including many portable components, such as the TSP. Unfortunately, as a wealth-building mechanism within a 20-25 year career, the TSP has shown great fluctuations in value. To compensate for a volatile market, the pension system incorporated supplemental payments, providing a stable retirement for law enforcement officers. The pension is also a powerful recruiting and retention tool to ensure federal law enforcement agencies always have the best and brightest candidates, a notable benefit at a time when many federal agencies, including the US Secret Service, US Marshal's Service, CBP and others, are struggling to recruit and retain a professional workforce.

During the Committee's budget work, we would encourage you to ensure that federal law enforcement officers' pay and benefits are protected and that the pension system is maintained.

After the assassination attempt against Members of Congress in Alexandria, Chairman Gowdy tweeted, "Praying for @SteveScalise, his staff and @CapitolPolice. Thank you to our @CapitolPolice officers who protect us each and every day."

Ranking Member Cummings tweeted, "I am praying for a speedy recovery for Congressman Scalise and all those injured during the heinous ambush this morning. I am grateful for the swift response from our first responders—including the U.S. Capitol Police and the Alexandria City Police Department—whose bravery helped save many lives."

Please keep those comments in mind and remember that when America is under attack in any corner, it's the federal law enforcement officers who will continue to answer the call and save lives.

Respectfully,

Nathan R. Catura

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National President

Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association