

H.R. 299 finally acknowledges that our Blue Water Navy Veterans were exposed to these toxic chemicals. It remedies the inequity among veterans of the Vietnam era by extending the presumption of service connection for certain conditions to those who served offshore, and it is a long overdue step towards making these veterans whole. I hope that the Senate will swiftly take up this legislation once the House passes it today.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to support this legislation and finally welcome back home our Blue Water Navy Veterans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 299, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

REAUTHORIZING BULLETPROOF VEST PARTNERSHIP GRANT PROGRAM

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2379) to reauthorize the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2379

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. BULLETPROOF VEST PARTNERSHIP GRANT PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1001(a)(23) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10261(a)(23)) is amended by striking “part Y” and all that follows and inserting “part Y, \$30,000,000 for fiscal year 2020, and each fiscal year thereafter.”.

(b) PROGRAM NAME.—Part Y of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10531 et seq.) is amended by inserting before section 2501 the following:

“SEC. 2500. PATRICK LEAHY BULLETPROOF VEST PARTNERSHIP GRANT PROGRAM.

“The program under this part shall be known as the ‘Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program’.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program stands as a shining example of the public safety collaboration between Congress and local governments to improve public safety and protect the officers who protect us.

In the 20 years that the program has been in existence, Congress has allocated funds that have enabled local law enforcement agencies to purchase more than 1.3 million bulletproof vests. Through this program, thousands of officers have survived what would otherwise have been deadly shootings.

Without the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program, local jurisdictions that lack the financial means to purchase vests would simply be unable to do so.

As reauthorized under H.R. 2379, the program would give priority to small jurisdictions that apply for assistance. Those that most need the Federal support will continue to have priority.

An often-overlooked element of the program is the supporting role the National Institute of Justice plays in providing expert analysis on the quality and life expectancy of bulletproof vests, ensuring that officers who patrol our streets every day and every night wear vests that will give them the measure of safety that they deserve. Importantly, the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program has worked in recent years to ensure the vests that female officers are issued fit properly and provide the same protection as the vests that male officers are issued.

With H.R. 2379, the House today takes a crucial step toward ending an uncertainty concerning the future of the program by permanently authorizing its funding at \$30 million per year.

It is fitting that we consider this important legislation at the start of National Police Week, which honors those who serve and have paid the ultimate price and sacrifice in protecting our communities.

Since President John F. Kennedy first signed the proclamation designating National Peace Officers Memorial Day in 1962, officers and citizens assemble in our Nation’s Capital during Police Week to thank law enforcement officers for their service, dedication, and commitment.

It is in that spirit that we seek to reauthorize the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program. It is also fitting that this bill names the program in honor of the distinguished Senator from Vermont, PATRICK LEAHY, who played a critical role in conceiving it and who has been a consistent champion of its continuation and, now, its permanent reauthorization.

I thank Senator LEAHY for his leadership.

I would be remiss if I were not to recognize the tireless efforts of the author of H.R. 2379, my good friend Congressman BILL PASCRELL, who has worked diligently to bring this bipartisan bill to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important bill that will help protect those who put their lives on the line to protect us. I urge my colleagues to support it today, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2379, a bill to reauthorize the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program, and I would also like to thank Mr. PASCRELL for his work on this. This is something that we have seen over many years, and I appreciate the chairman and my friend from Georgia on the committee for bringing this forward as well.

The Bulletproof Vest Partnership, or the BVP, created by the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act of 1998, is a unique U.S. Department of Justice initiative designed to provide a critical resource to State and local law enforcement. The goal of the BVP is to support the purchase of body armor that has been tested and found to comply with applicable ballistic and stab standards promulgated by the National Institute of Justice.

For the past 20 years, the BVP has awarded more than 13,000 jurisdictions a total of \$467 million in Federal funds for the purchase of over 1.3 million vests.

From fiscal year 2015 through 2017, protective vests were directly attributable to saving the lives of at least 129 law enforcement and corrections officers. BVP funds helped purchase 21 of those vests.

In short, body armor saves lives. For 30 years, bullet-resistant body armor has protected law enforcement officers from ballistic and nonballistic incidents. As recorded by the IACP/DuPont Kevlar Survivors’ Club, more than 3,100 officers have survived potentially fatal or disabling injuries because they were wearing their body armor.

The bill before us today permanently reauthorizes this vitally important program. It will ensure our local heroes are protected from those who try to do them harm.

When a law enforcement officer leaves home in the morning, there is no guarantee he or she will return home safely that evening. This program makes it more likely, though, that these heroes will see their families again.

That is why I am an original cosponsor of H.R. 2379. As the son of a Georgia State trooper, I know what that means.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the brave

men and women who place their lives on the line to protect our communities. They deserve every ounce of support from their government.

I introduced H.R. 2379 to permanently authorize the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program at \$30 million every year. Our bill will help struggling law enforcement agencies maintain the necessary lifesaving bulletproof vests for each of their officers.

Making this important grant program permanent is one of the most sensible policies Congress can pursue. According to the Government Accountability Office, more than 3,000 law enforcement lives have been saved by armored vests since 1987.

But vests are costly, and they wear out. Thankfully, this Federal program has ensured our Nation's police officers are equipped with the latest technology to keep them safe.

For the last two decades, the program has awarded more than 13,000 jurisdictions a total of \$467 million in matching Federal funds to help purchase more than 1.3 million vests.

Mr. Speaker, we know that having well-staffed, well-trained, and properly equipped public safety departments is critical to ensuring our communities are safe. The importance of sustained Federal funding on this front cannot be overstated.

I am proud the House of Representatives is considering this legislation during National Police Week, as was just mentioned. We mourned the loss of 158 law enforcement officers in 2018 who died in the line of duty, three of whom served in New Jersey. At 53, this was the deadliest year for law enforcement officers being shot.

Ensuring more vests are in the field, which can help reduce the statistics, is our goal.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize the three officers from New Jersey who died while serving in the line of duty.

First was my friend from New Jersey, Tamby Yagan of the Paterson Police Department. With 13 years of service in his hometown, Officer Yagan died in an automobile crash while on duty on April 22, 2018.

Lieutenant Christopher Robateau from Jersey City passed on January 5, 2018, after being struck by a vehicle.

New Jersey State Police Trooper Robert Emmet Nagle passed on November 26, 2018, because of 9/11-related illness.

Mr. Speaker, I grieve for their families, as do you, and their loved ones. I know this House does, too.

Our Nation's local, State, and Federal law enforcement officers constitute both the first and last lines of protection for the American people. These officers deserve our support, and I am committed to ensuring that they have the resources needed to protect the public's safety.

Congress has renewed the program five times, most recently in 2016. The current authorization expires next year.

I especially thank Congressman PETER KING from New York, who is always there on the firing line for our police officers. On every bill, on every piece of legislation, he is there.

I also thank LINDSEY GRAHAM from South Carolina and, of course, the bill's namesake, PATRICK LEAHY.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman from New Jersey an additional 1 minute.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, this bill has strong support from several law enforcement groups, including the National Sheriffs' Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Association of Police Organizations, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Sergeants Benevolent Association, and the Major County Sheriffs' Association.

I thank Chairman NADLER for allowing our bill to be released.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in strongly supporting H.R. 2379.

□ 1545

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I do appreciate this time. This is a special week for me personally because it is recognizing something that I grew up with. It recognizes something that I am that I can't get a part of who I am. And I appreciate Mr. PASCRELL, my friend from New Jersey, talking about this and what that actually means.

But for what I will just term as a trooper's kid, this week means a lot. And it would mean even more when we come here if really, we had had more to do this week. I say that with respect, and I say that with love, because this is a good bill, and I urge everyone to support it, and I want to.

But just this past week, in Georgia, just as was recommended and said in New Jersey, just in the past few days in Savannah, Georgia, we lost another officer, Sergeant Kelvin Ansari, in an incident. He went to work and did not come home.

For the past few years, I have been in this body, and we have worked during Police Week, even beforehand, to bring up bills and to bring up issues that involve our law enforcement community because I recognize, and I know others in this body do as well, that on those mornings when they get up to go to work, the ladies and gentlemen who serve us in our law enforcement community, all of us, they are giving a gift of life to go serve others.

And on many days, unfortunately, the headlines will show to us that they don't return home; some through violence; some through activity; some, as we have seen this past year in this country, ambushed in front of their own police departments; cruelly murdered by those anarchists in this country who believe that the police are the enemy; and sometimes, fed by others

who want a different version of what upholding the law means. And that is sad.

My heart breaks, because when those officers don't come home, there is a space left at the table. There is a void left in the hearts of families and communities.

One of my earliest remembrances of my dad as a trooper, and one of the biggest things that made an impression on me, was years ago there was a trooper who had made a stop on 129 South out of Gainesville, Georgia, T.C. Dillard. As he made that stop, a young man who was not in his right mind through drugs, came over a hill and hit him.

I remember hearing about it. I was young at the time, and I remember him being taken to the hospital. And I can remember my dad and other officers all going to the hospital, and they were giving blood and doing whatever they could. It was one of the first times I remember of my earliest remembrances of watching my dad cry.

To a scrawny kid from north Georgia, who had a dad, and has a dad who is 6 feet 2 inches, 250 pounds, carried a .357 on his hip, and wore the badge of the Georgia State Patrol, he was and is my hero. To see him cry was something I had not experienced. To watch him love another officer and do anything for that officer is something that has impacted me today.

As we move forward, and we look at the things today, I guess my only thing—and I wanted to spend just a few more moments on this, because this is our only chance. This is the only bill that we have dealing with Law Enforcement Week this week.

I know that we are busy in the Judiciary Committee. I know that we have got a lot of other things going on. I know that we have so many things that we need to investigate, and I get that.

I am not—for once, I am just honestly speaking as much as a Congressman as I am as a trooper's kid.

Thirty thousand officers will be coming to Washington, D.C. over the next few days to honor those who have fallen, and to remember this week. And this bill, which is a good bill, is it. It is all we are offering. It is all we are discussing.

In years past, in 2018, we had six bills, including one rule bill. In 2017, nine bills, including two rule bills. 2016, eight bills, including two rule bills. Protect and Serve, Thin Blue Line, Probation Officer Protection Act of 2017, the Comprehensive Opioid and Abuse Act, which gave our officers training in how they can actually help in an opioid crisis.

I understand that we have a lot going on, but in our committee right now we have H.R. 816, which would ensure certain law enforcement officers on college campuses and their families are eligible for death and disability benefits under the Public Safety Officers Benefit Program.

H.R. 816 is named in honor of Sean Collier, a police officer at MIT who was

murdered by one of the Tsarnaev brothers after the attack at the Boston Marathon. This is to make sure their family has security.

Another bill from my committee colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. RESCENTHALER), is his aim to prevent law enforcement suicides. Other bills that we have pending for law enforcement by helping them provide resources to combat opioid crisis or curb sex trafficking. In years past, we have considered numerous bills, not all of them, in fact, most of them non-controversial. But we didn't seem to have time to mark them up this year or to bring them forward.

I understand, and I am trying my best to just bring an honest concern, because when you look at these officers—and I used to ride with them; as I got older and I went to seminary and I was a chaplain for the Gainesville Police Department—it never leaves you.

As I came here today, and I appreciate my friend from Georgia, we have shared so many things together, we have done this, and Mr. PASCRELL and others who have talked about this.

But this is it. This is our only chance to actually say to these people—instead of just saying we appreciate you; we love you; and we are glad that you do what you do and offer them help in the things that they do, we offer them bulletproof vests, which is good; but it is all we are offering right now.

And I want to make sure, on this floor, for those kids whose dads and moms didn't come home this past year, just a reminder that it is not about what we say to those officers, it is also what we do.

I live each day, as best as I possibly can, to do as best as I possibly can for the ones who have given me so much; my mom, who I lost last June, my dad, who I still have, who taught me how to grow up; how to love; how to care; taught me to serve my country in the military and to serve my country here.

But when I come to a discussion today, and I heard my friend from New Jersey so eloquently discuss those who lost their lives in New Jersey and here in Savannah, the one thing that gets me up every morning, and if I have had a bad day, or if I am thinking about it, and when I hear all the discussion in this country about officers who are bad, or officers who are not doing it right, and officers—I understand the discussion that we need to have in our communities, and how we need to come together as communities to help each other and to lift each other up, from the poorest communities to the richest; the police are there to take the law. And if there are bad ones, they need to be got out. But they are 99.99 percent good, who honestly just want to do a good job, and we need to honor that.

But when we talk about bulletproof vests, when we talk about other issues of how we care for officers, just remember those this week, especially those who didn't come home because, Mr.

Speaker, except by the grace of God, I would have not known my father, because on a traffic stop, when I was still a small child, he walked up to a car. He caught a glint of a gun laying on the shoulder of the driver. He, fortunately, was able to pull his gun, and they stood there for many minutes in a standoff until the gentleman threw the gun out of the car window. That incident almost deprived me of knowing my hero.

When we talk about police, when we talk about law enforcement and the other first responders on all sides, but the police we are talking about today, I just humbly believe that there is more that we can do, and I look forward to working with our committee to do more throughout this year.

But on this week, it is worth pointing out that these folks stand in the line, many of them not sleeping while we sleep, and they are worth protecting, and they are worth more, frankly, than this one bill; and I look forward to working with my Democratic colleagues to make sure that we see more come across this floor.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This could not be a more solemn moment than what my friend from Georgia just expressed to the Nation about our State and local law enforcement personnel, male, female, Black, White, Latino, Asian, this legislation is an effort to protect them.

And I will note that there have not been just one, but actually three deaths of law enforcement officers already this year in the State of Georgia. The numbers are up. It is very concerning, and this is something that we can do to help protect the lives of our law enforcement officers.

I know that my friend from Georgia, Representative COLLINS, has a long and storied history of support for State and local law enforcement, and I stand with him in his concern, and I stand with him in his support for this very important legislation that my friend, BILL PASCRELL, has introduced.

I will note that a lot of little boys and girls who first go into law enforcement, they go into local and State law enforcement, and then they are able to attain their ultimate dream, which is to become an FBI agent.

FBI agents are Federal law enforcement agents. They are sworn to protect and serve; they wear a gun, and they wake up every morning not knowing what they will face during that day. Some have given their lives in the ultimate sacrifice for this Nation.

So, in addition to our State and local law enforcement agents, we, today, uphold our Federal law enforcement agents who work for the various Federal law enforcement agencies, including the FBI, with its storied history of integrity.

So, it is not about what we say; it is about what we do. It is about what we

say also, because what we say has an impact on those who serve us. And we cannot, because of one or two outliers, indict the entire State or local law enforcement agency for the imperfections of the few; nor can we do so with our Federal law enforcement agencies, particularly our premier Federal law enforcement agency, the FBI.

I support the FBI. I support our State and local law enforcement agencies.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKEY).

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2379, which will permanently reauthorize the Bulletproof Vest Partnership program.

I want to particularly thank Mr. PASCRELL, as well as Mr. KING, for taking the lead on this very important legislation.

In 1997, I co-authored the original legislation to create the Bulletproof Vest Partnership program with the gentleman who originated the idea for this legislation, and who was the original cosponsor, our good friend, former colleague, Representative Frank LoBiondo, from the State of New Jersey; he had been active over the last 22 years in having the act reauthorized, which is why I strongly support this bill to add permanence to it.

As has been mentioned during the debate, there have been over 13,000 jurisdictions who have been helped. I represent the First Congressional District in Indiana, and in Fiscal Year 2018 the Bulletproof Vest Partnership program provided \$80,738 to local law enforcement in Northwest Indiana. This assisted in the purchase of about 200 new vests for officers who are protecting our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here to reiterate my strong support for this legislation, and I ask my colleagues to support it.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am almost at the end, but as I was finishing up—and I appreciate the gentleman from Georgia's words, and I agree that we can—but I would be remiss if I didn't share what I just got in my inbox. I just got this in my inbox.

It is a letter signed by my chairman of my committee and four other members of our committee on Police Week. After I just talked about how we can do more, this is what we are doing more.

“As you know, the House Judiciary Committee exercises legislative and oversight jurisdiction in the areas of civil rights and criminal law enforcement. These areas continue to be subjects of intense national concern in the wake of high-profile incidents involving the fatal use of force by law enforcement against unarmed people in cities such as Ferguson, Baltimore, Cleveland, Chicago, Falcon Heights, Tulsa, Pittsburgh, and Dallas. In 2018, 992 people were shot and killed by police. In the first 2 months of this year, at least 265 people have suffered the same fate.”

Mr. Speaker, I include the May 14, 2019, letter in the RECORD.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, May 14, 2019.

Hon. WILLIAM P. BARR,
Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice,
Washington, DC.

DEAR ATTORNEY GENERAL BARR: As you know, the House Judiciary Committee exercises legislative and oversight jurisdiction in areas of civil rights and criminal law enforcement. These areas continue to be subjects of intense national concern in the wake of high-profile incidents involving the fatal use of force by law enforcement against unarmed people in cities such as Ferguson, Baltimore, Cleveland, Chicago, Falcon Heights, Tulsa, Pittsburgh, and Dallas. In 2018, 992 people were shot and killed by police. “In the first two months of this year, at least 265 people have suffered the same fate.”

Despite continuing concerns from civil rights and community-based organizations, the Department has sharply curtailed its statutory role in identifying and eradicating civil rights abuses by law enforcement. Excessive force in police-civilian encounters presents a crisis of trust throughout our nation. Changes to Department policy and failure to uphold the law run the risk of undermining federal oversight authority in this space.

Congress identified the need for the Department and community stakeholders to play a role in eliminating unjust and discriminatory practices by law enforcement. With that goal in mind, Congress has provided the Department with the authority to identify and eliminate patterns and practices of unconstitutional conduct in law enforcement agencies through civil action and administrative authority. Additionally, it provided the Department the ability to encourage communities to have a voice in how they are policed through programs offered by the Community Oriented Policing Services or “COPS Office.” These tools must be used to promote Constitutional policing practices that support public safety and respect civil rights and civil liberties.

Accordingly, we write to request information related to the manner in which the Department of Justice is currently carrying out its statutory responsibilities to eliminate patterns and practices of unconstitutional conduct in law enforcement agencies. We respectfully request you provide complete responses and produce the relevant documents and communications listed below by no later than June 5, 2019:

1. Documents and communications dated from January 1, 2017 to March 31, 2017, relating to Attorney General Sessions’s March 31, 2017 Memorandum, “Supporting Federal, State, Local, and Tribal Law Enforcement.” This should include any prior drafts of the memorandum. Please include a list identifying all individuals involved in the decision to conduct the review of “existing or contemplated consent decrees.”

2. Documents and communications dated from January 1, 2017 to November 7, 2018, relating to Attorney General Sessions’s November 7, 2018 Memorandum “Principles and Procedures for Civil Consent Decrees and Settlement Agreements with State and Local Government Entities.” This should include any prior drafts of the memorandum. Please include a list identifying all individuals involved in the decision to identify issues arising from the Department’s “civil action[s] against a state or local government . . . by consent decree or settlement agreement.”

3. Documents and communications dated from January 1, 2017 to November 21, 2018,

from or to the Acting Associate Attorney General Jesse Panuccio and Deputy Associate Attorney General Stephen Cox concerning the Department’s recession or withdrawal of policies, procedures, and guidance issued by the Civil Rights Division, the Office of Justice Programs, the COPS Office, and the Office of Violence Against Women.

4. Please provide copies of any standards or guidelines, by which the Department identifies potential patterns or practices of conduct by law enforcement agencies that deprive persons of rights, privileges, or immunities secured or protected by the Constitution or laws of the United States.

5. Documents and communications dated from January 1, 2017 to the date of this letter, identifying any Department-negotiated consent decree, authorized under 34 U.S.C. Section 12601 (b), that has “deprived the elected representatives of the people of any affected jurisdiction of control over their government.”

6. Documents and communications dated from January 1, 2017 to the date of this letter, identifying any Department-negotiated consent decree, authorized under 34 U.S.C. Section 12601 (b), that has subjected a law enforcement agency to ongoing court oversight after the Department determined that the purpose of the consent decree had been achieved.

7. Documents and Communications dated from January 1, 2017 to the date of this letter, from non-government organizations relating to the Department’s review of existing or proposed consent decrees or reform agreements pursuant to the Attorney General’s March 31, 2017 Memorandum.

8. Documents and communications dated from November 7, 2018 to the date of this letter, relating to updating standards or guidelines used to identify patterns and practices of discriminations by state or local law enforcement agencies. This response should include how complaints against recipients of federal financial assistance from the Office of Justice Programs, other grant making agencies, and participants in the Asset Forfeiture Program are centrally accounted for or tabulated and considered in opening investigations into alleged discriminatory patterns and practices by law enforcement agency.

9. Copies of standards or guidelines in force as of January 1, 2017, that the Department uses to determine whether the Attorney General has reasonable cause to believe that a violation of 34 U.S.C. Section 12601(a) has occurred.

10. Documents and communications dated from November 7, 2018 to the date of this letter, relating to updating guidelines or standards used to determine whether the Attorney General has reasonable cause to believe that a violation of 34 U.S.C. Section 12601(a) has occurred.

11. Copies of any evidence-based study, analysis, or report supporting the decision to adopt the general statement of principles as memorialized in the Attorney General’s November 7, 2018 Memorandum.

12. Documents and communications dated from January 1, 2018 to the date of this letter, relating to proposed changes to the existing memorandums of understanding or agreement, resolution agreements, or consent decrees, including but not limited to the matters open in Baltimore, Chicago, and Ferguson.

13. Total number of preliminary inquiries and investigations of law enforcement agencies opened, initiated, or given a case or other tracking number by the Civil Rights Division or civil rights matters opened by the Office of Justice Programs after January 1, 2017. Please include a list identifying each law enforcement agency subject to a prelimi-

nary investigation or inquiry after January 1, 2017, and a brief description of the basis for the preliminary investigation or inquiry.

14. Total number of preliminary inquiries or investigations of law enforcement agencies closed after March 31, 2017. Please include a list identifying the date each case was closed, the identity of the law enforcement agency subject of the preliminary inquiry or investigation, and a brief description of the basis for closing the preliminary investigation or inquiry.

15. Total number of complaints, referrals, or multi-party complaints received by the Department after January 1, 2017, from a federal, state, or local public official relating to potential pattern or practice violations by a law enforcement agency. Please provide brief descriptions of each referral or complaint.

16. Documents and communications dated from February 9, 2017 to the date of this letter, relating to modifications of existing agreements for technical assistance with law enforcement agencies, COPS Office proposed budget, or changes to existing Department guidelines or standards relating to the administration of the Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance.

17. Total number of requests, including any memorandums or communications dated after January 1, 2017 to the date of this letter, to open investigations of law enforcement agency officers or agencies from the Special Litigation Section to the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights under section 12601.

18. Documents or Communications dated from January 1, 2017 to the date of this letter, related to the review and decision to retreat from the agreement in principle with the Chicago Police Department and Chicago, including any review or analysis of the findings by the AG and his office of evidence of constitutional violations presented in the findings letter dated January 3, 2017.

19. An account of open investigations alleging an unlawful pattern and practice or disparate impact involving law enforcement agencies and explanation of what steps the Department has taken to withdraw federal funding of law enforcement agencies that are subject to the grant conditions pursuant to Title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968. In your response, please address the Department’s investigations of the Springfield, Massachusetts Police Department, the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency, and the Orange County District Attorney’s Office and Sheriff’s Department.

Thank you for your prompt attention on this matter. We look forward to working more closely with your office in the 116th Congress.

Sincerely,

JERROLD NADLER,
Chairman, House Committee on the Judiciary.

KAREN BASS,
Chairwoman, Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security, House Committee on the Judiciary.

MARY GAY SCANLON,
Vice Chair, House Committee on the Judiciary.

STEVE COHEN,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties, House Committee on the Judiciary.

SHEILA JACKSON LEE,
Member of Congress.

□ 1600

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Are you kidding me? We couldn't wait a week?

Look, vote for this bill. This bill is a good bill. But this shows the dedication of the majority to Police Week right here. It is about what my chairman of the committee did. It is about what we say and what we do. This is what we did.

On the first part of Police Week, we sent to the Attorney General a discussion about people who are shot by police, many of which in no context here of how the accidents occurred or how it occurred or what was actually happening; it is just that we need to go investigate, a 4-, 5-page letter.

Vote for the bill. The bill is a good bill.

This letter is embarrassing.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining for both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) has 6½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) has 6½ minutes remaining.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am ready to close, and I yield myself the balance of my time.

Again, I will come back to the issue. This bulletproof vest bill is a great bill. It needs to be permanent. In fact, if we can do better, it would be great. We need to do more.

I made my point about this letter, and, unfortunately, this is a stain on Police Week, and hopefully we can do better, and I know we will.

I trust my friend from Georgia. I trust my friend from New Jersey. We can do this, and we can do this better. I am sorry that this is the way it has had to start, but actions do speak louder than anything else, than words, like I said, and this is an action on Police Week that, frankly, is unbelievable.

Support this underlying bill. Support this bill for bulletproof vests. Support our officers not just with words, but with actions as well, and I know the Members here on this floor are doing that. It is just a shame that this had to come out with that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The top law enforcement individual in the country is the Attorney General, and our Attorney General has declared war on the FBI by ordering a third investigation into the origins of the Mueller investigation. This is nothing more than an attack on our own premier law enforcement agency. It is politics reduced to its lowest level at the same time as Police Week is occurring.

What does it say to those down the line, to those aspiring boys and girls who aspire to be FBI agents?

What does it say to the men and women who are currently in law enforcement and looking to move into Federal law enforcement?

Well, it doesn't tell them to not aspire to that height. I think most look beyond the politics of the day, and when they consider the legislation that is at hand, they support it without regard to political persuasion. They support the fact that H.R. 2379, introduced by my friend BILL PASCRELL, is a testament to the important role that Congress plays in promoting officer safety today and for decades to come.

In passing this bill during Police Week, we acknowledge the many contributions that law enforcement officers make to public safety, and we thank them for their service. We also recognize that there are challenges within law enforcement that we must weed out and that are an affront to the ideals that law enforcement officers are taught to adhere to, and we must do that, as well.

But today it is not about that. Today it is about bulletproof vests for our law enforcement officers on the State and local level. We will make sure that our Federal officers are always protected, but today it is about State and local law enforcement agents and agencies, particularly those that cannot afford to purchase these bulletproof vests or to keep current in terms of these vests when they wear out.

They do wear out, and they have to be replaced, and they have to have money to do that. This bill will enable \$30 million per year to be permanently authorized. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2379, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on that, I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

FIRST RESPONDER ACCESS TO INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES ACT

Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1594) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a process to review applications for certain grants to purchase equipment or systems that do not meet or exceed any applicable national voluntary consensus standards, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1594

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "First Responder Access to Innovative Technologies Act".

SEC. 2. APPROVAL OF CERTAIN EQUIPMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2008 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 609) is amended—

(1) in subsection (f)—

(A) by striking "If an applicant" and inserting the following:

"(1) APPLICATION REQUIREMENT.—If an applicant"; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

"(2) REVIEW PROCESS.—The Administrator shall implement a uniform process for reviewing applications that, in accordance with paragraph (1), contain explanations to use grants provided under section 2003 or 2004 to purchase equipment or systems that do not meet or exceed any applicable national voluntary consensus standards developed under section 647 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (6 U.S.C. 747).

"(3) FACTORS.—In carrying out the review process under paragraph (2), the Administrator shall consider the following:

"(A) Current or past use of proposed equipment or systems by Federal agencies or the Armed Forces.

"(B) The absence of a national voluntary consensus standard for such equipment or systems.

"(C) The existence of an international consensus standard for such equipment or systems, and whether such equipment or systems meets such standard.

"(D) The nature of the capability gap identified by the applicant and how such equipment or systems will address such gap.

"(E) The degree to which such equipment or systems will serve the needs of the applicant better than equipment or systems that meet or exceed existing consensus standards.

"(F) Any other factor determined appropriate by the Administrator."; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(g) REVIEW PROCESS.—The Administrator shall implement a uniform process for reviewing applications to use grants provided under section 2003 or 2004 to purchase equipment or systems not included on the Authorized Equipment List maintained by the Administrator."

(b) INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT.—Not later than three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report assessing the implementation of the review process established under paragraph (2) of subsection (f) of section 2008 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (as added by subsection (a) of this section), including information on the following:

(1) The number of requests to purchase equipment or systems that do not meet or exceed any applicable consensus standard evaluated under such review process.

(2) The capability gaps identified by applicants and the number of such requests granted or denied.

(3) The processing time for the review of such requests.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from