

**UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL LANDS**

**TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM ALEXANDER
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS MEMORIAL FUND
SEPTEMBER 18, 2025**

Good morning, Chairman Tiffany and Ranking Member Neguse. My name is William Alexander, and I am the Chief Executive Officer of the National Law Enforcement Memorial Fund. Thank you for the opportunity to present this statement in support of H.R.309, the *National Law Enforcement Officers Remembrance, Support and Community Outreach Act*. This legislation establishes within the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) a formal program whereby the Secretary of the Interior would provide \$6 million a year to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund to support and enhance the community outreach, public education, and officer safety and wellness programs of the National Law Enforcement Museum.

I want to provide the subcommittee with a brief history of the Memorial Fund. The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund was established by an act of Congress in 1984, when Congress authorized the Fund to construct the National Law Enforcement Memorial (Public Law 98-534). The Memorial Fund is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that represents all major law enforcement organizations in the country, including federal, State, and Local Agencies; management and rank-and-file personnel; Survivor Support Organizations; and law enforcement research organizations. Our mission is to tell the story of American law enforcement and make it safer for those who serve.

In 1991, the Memorial Fund successfully raised private funds to complete the construction and dedicate the Memorial, located in Washington, D.C.'s Judiciary Square. It is our nation's monument to law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our communities and our country.

Engraved on the Memorial's walls are the names of 24,412 heroic men and women who, throughout our nation's history, risked their lives for the safety and protection of others. Unlike many other memorials here in our nation's capital, our monument is not static. Each May during National Police Week, we have the somber responsibility of adding more names of fallen heroes to our Memorial. This past May, we added the names of 345 officers who died in the line of duty — 148 in 2024 and 197 from previous years that the Memorial Fund's research staff verified and approved for inclusion on the Wall..

After the Memorial was built, our organization embarked on a new and equally ambitious endeavor—to create the first-ever National Law Enforcement Museum here in Washington, D.C. The mission of the Museum is to tell the rich and fascinating story of law enforcement in America, and its role in our free and democratic society.

In the year 2000, Congress passed the National Law Enforcement Museum Act, Public Law 106-492, authorizing the Memorial Fund to build a Museum on Federal land in Judiciary Square, directly across E Street, NW, from the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial. In 2018, the Memorial Fund raised the necessary private funds to build the Museum, and it was dedicated.

I'd also like to point out a few things about the Memorial Fund's longstanding relationship with the U.S. Department of the Interior.

From 1991 to 2006, the U.S. Department of the Interior, through the National Park Service, was responsible for maintaining and upkeep of the Memorial and its grounds. During that time, Interior worked closely with the Memorial Fund on maintenance issues and held several ceremonies, programs, and events at the Memorial.

Following the enactment into law in 2006 of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Maintenance Fund Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-314), the Secretary of the Interior entered into a cooperative agreement with the Memorial Fund under which the Memorial Fund would take over the cost and responsibility of maintaining the Memorial and Memorial grounds - working closely with the National Park Service.

The Memorial remains a National Park Service property (see this [link](#)), and the Memorial Fund continues to work closely with the U.S. Department of the Interior/National Park Service in hosting events, programs, and ceremonies at the Memorial.

By law ([Public Law 106-492](#)), the Memorial Fund runs and operates the National Law Enforcement Museum, and the Museum is a part of the Memorial Fund. The Memorial Fund runs all of the Museum's programs. Indeed, the Memorial Fund is the only entity, by law, that can operate the Museum.

The Memorial Fund worked closely with the U.S. Department of the Interior in establishing the Museum, as the Memorial Fund could not commence construction of the Museum unless the Secretary of the Interior certified that the Memorial Fund had all the necessary private funds on hand prior to construction.

The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial and the National Law Enforcement Museum in Judiciary Square represent the nation's only federal property dedicated exclusively to honoring law enforcement and educating the public about the vital importance of law enforcement to a democratic society.

The Memorial Fund has a 34-year relationship with the Department of the Interior, maintaining the Memorial and delivering an array of programming at the Site, as well as since its dedication in 2018, with the National Law Enforcement Museum.

Since opening in October 2018, the Museum has become the primary way the Memorial Fund delivers its programs. We focus on three pillars: honoring and remembering the fallen; educating the public about law enforcement and building stronger community connections; and advancing officer safety and wellness. These programs are as vital as those of any national memorial or museum that already receives federal support.

Yet, since the Memorial was established in 1991, the Memorial Fund has never received federal support for its programming — aside from a small traffic-safety grant from NHTSA and several

modest DOJ grants for our SAFE LEO program.

With federal funding, we will be able to open the Museum free to the public. That means every visitor, regardless of ability to pay, can walk through our doors. Free access will expand public knowledge of law enforcement history, increase awareness of officer sacrifices, and help bring officers and the communities they serve closer together.

That is the motivation behind H.R. 309, and part of the reason that the bill has garnered strong bipartisan support. To date, the bill has 114 cosponsors, including Ranking Member Neguse - Reps. Amodei, Hunt and Stauber - as well as three other members of this subcommittee, and 10 members of the full committee. We are proud of the support this bill has garnered and believe strongly that it will enable the Memorial Fund — for the first time — to have a truly national impact in saving police lives nationwide and fostering closer ties between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

The bill will allow us to expand and enhance our array of programming, including programs to:

- Memorialize law enforcement heroes who die in the line of duty and compile statistics on law enforcement fatalities and injuries.
- Honor and commemorate the extraordinary service and sacrifice of America's law enforcement officers.
- Develop and make available accurate, relevant, and accessible resources to promote the understanding of law enforcement history and officer safety and wellness training.

- Increase technical resources to improve public engagement both in person and online, educating and informing the community about policing, officer safety, and wellness.
- Create, expand, and disseminate scholarly work through research, curricula, in-house and traveling exhibitions, publications, and other outreach initiatives.
- Expand the collection and acquisition processes, including staffing, conservation, processing, and digitization.
- Augment law enforcement history and officer safety and wellness education activities, including the development, dissemination, and implementation of principles of sound pedagogy for teaching about law enforcement history and officer safety and wellness.
- Promote professional development, including local, regional, and national workshops; teacher training; and partnerships with relevant entities to better educate and inform the public about law enforcement history and officer safety and wellness education.
- Engage with local and independent educational agencies to expand teacher engagement and cultivate the development of leaders in teaching law enforcement history and officer safety and wellness education.

When it comes to officer safety and wellness programming, the bill would allow us to deploy teams around the country to work with smaller law enforcement agencies to conduct regional seminars and trainings on the latest best practices on law enforcement challenges such as active shooter response, traffic stops, officer mental health, dealing with citizens with mental health issues, and domestic violence incidents. We know that these kinds of programs save both police lives and the lives of citizens. This bill will significantly advance our ability to reach departments across the country with lifesaving training and information.

Regarding community education and outreach, the bill will enable us to significantly expand our successful programs at the Museum and nationwide, educating the public — especially young people — about law enforcement and inspiring them to consider a career in this field. As importantly, the bill would allow us to significantly expand on our past efforts to facilitate conversations and forums between community activists and law enforcement leaders in communities that have experienced frayed relationships with their local law enforcement agencies. This kind of positive engagement leads to a better level of understanding between local communities and the law enforcement agencies that serve them. This kind of community engagement also saves lives — and it makes law enforcement safer and communities safer. And it's something that we can do on a national scale with the funding provided in this legislation.

I could provide dozens more examples of how this bill would expand and enhance the impact of our programming nationally. But hopefully, this gives you an idea of the scope and impact this bill would have. Again, it is not hyperbole to say that the programs of the Memorial Fund are as important and impactful as the programs of any national memorial or museum currently receiving federal support.

In closing, I recognize that when discussing any authorization bill, it is essential to identify the sources of funding. I am by no means an expert in the federal budget. But I suggest to the committee that the most appropriate manner to fund this initiative is through an amendment to transfer the funds for this program from the Smithsonian to the Secretary of the Interior. While such an amendment might be somewhat unorthodox, I believe it is appropriate. Again, the

Memorial Fund has had a close relationship and partnership with the Interior Department and would like to build on that relationship and partnership with this legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration. At this time, I am happy to answer any questions the subcommittee members may have.

#