

April 26, 2022

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL URGES CONGRESS TO PASS BENEFITS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS, FAMILIES AFFECTED BY WORK-RELATED PTSD

Chicago — Attorney General Raoul, as part of a bipartisan coalition of 53 attorneys general, urged Congress to pass the Public Safety Officer Support Act of 2022. The legislation would address current gaps in support for public safety officers who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) associated with the high-risk nature of their jobs.

[In the letter to Congress](#), the attorneys general acknowledge the significant job-related stressors and exposure to trauma experienced on a daily basis by police, firefighters and emergency medical technicians and the cumulative effect that work can have on mental health. Raoul and the attorneys general urge passage of the proposed legislation that would expand the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program (PSOB) to support public safety officers who have died or are disabled as a result of suicide, suicide attempts or PTSD. Compared to the general public, public safety officers are 25.6 times more likely to develop PTSD, and research has shown individuals suffering from PTSD are at increased risk of suicide.

"Every day, thousands of Illinois police officers, firefighters and emergency responders go to work protecting our communities and responding to emergency situations," Raoul said. "Many of these interactions are stressful and traumatic, leading to an increased risk for mental health comorbidities. It is vital we do everything we can to support these individuals who support us every day."

The proposed legislation supports public safety officers suffering from PTSD by:

- Designating work-related PTSD as a "line-of duty" injury for eligible officers and those disabled from attempted suicide.
- Allowing families of officers who die by trauma-linked suicide to apply for death benefits.

The proposal is endorsed by the American Psychological Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the National Association of Police Organizations, the Sergeants Benevolent Association, the National Sheriffs Association, Blue H.E.L.P, the National Border Patrol Council and the United States Capitol Police Labor Committee.

Joining Raoul in filing the comment letter are the attorneys general of Alaska, American Samoa, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Northern Mariana Islands, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virgin Islands, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.