



Herbert H. Slatery III Attorney General & Reporter

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AG SLATERY URGES CONGRESS TO PASS SAFEGUARDING AMERICA'S FIRST RESPONDERS ACT

Nashville- General Herbert H. Slatery III is joining a bipartisan coalition of state attorneys general urging Congress to pass S.3607, the Safeguarding America's First Responders Act. The Act would permit the families of first responders, who die or are permanently and totally disabled as a result of COVID-19 to receive the same federal benefits extended to first responders, or their survivors, otherwise killed or injured in the line of duty. Current federal law would only allow survivors access to certain benefits if evidence is provided proving the deceased or permanently disabled first responder contracted COVID-19 while on duty.

"COVID-19 is a new threat to the men and women who serve in public safety roles," said General Slatery. "Officers, first responders, and their families deserve the protection the SAFR Act will provide."

In a letter sent to Congress today, General Slatery and 51 other attorneys general urged quick passage of the SAFR Act. The letter states, in part, "When public safety officers are called to respond, they do not know whether they are coming into contact with a person who is positive for COVID-19. We have seen harrowing stories about how public safety officers have taken heroic actions to save the lives of others, knowing that they risked infection in doing so."

To read the letter, click here:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/attorneygeneral/documents/pr/2020/pr20-20-letter.pdf>

The SAFR Act would establish a temporary presumption that officers contracted COVID-19 while on duty if diagnosed within 45 days of a first responder's last shift. The legislation ensures families of officers and first responders lost while fighting the pandemic do not face unnecessary barriers to benefits already promised under existing federal law.

This legislation recently passed the United States Senate and is currently being considered by the House of Representatives.

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