

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 17, 2012

The Honorable Lamar Smith
Chairman
House Judiciary Committee
2138 Rayburn House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr
Ranking Member
House Judiciary Committee
B-351 Rayburn House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Conyers:

As Co-Chairs of the House Law Enforcement Caucus we would like to express our strong support for H.R. 365, the *National Blue Alert Act of 2011*, introduced by Representative Michael Grimm. This legislation is critical to ensuring the future safety of our law enforcement men and women as well as the communities they put their lives on the line to protect each day. We respectfully request that the House Judiciary Committee hold the legislative hearings necessary to swiftly move this bill to the floor for consideration by the full House of Representatives.

Modeled after the successful federal AMBER Alert program, H.R. 365 will help states create a "Blue Alert" system to quickly disseminate information when a law enforcement officer is fatally injured or killed in the line of duty. Blue Alerts would be issued when a suspect has not been apprehended and poses a serious threat to the community. While a handful of states, including Washington State, have already taken the initiative to develop state-level Blue Alert systems, the federal government can help encourage more states in this effort. H.R. 365 will create a national voluntary Blue Alert program within the Department of Justice and designate a national coordinator responsible for disseminating best practices, voluntary guidelines, and protocols for suspect apprehension to help guide states in the development of their Blue Alert systems. The bill also authorizes the use of existing COPS program funds to provide training and technical assistance to states, and therefore does not increase costs to the federal government to carry out the program.

Creation of a national Blue Alert program will go a long way toward protecting our communities and keeping families safe. Statistics show that unprovoked attacks on law enforcement are on the rise, and according to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, gun-related incidents are now the leading cause of officer fatalities for the first time in fourteen years. When suspects flee crime scenes, they pose serious threats to communities; they are often armed and very dangerous, and after killing a law enforcement officer, they may not hesitate to harm innocent bystanders as well. H.R. 365 will help facilitate the creation of Blue Alert systems in states across the nation so when tragedy strikes, the public is on notice, and suspects can more quickly be apprehended and brought to justice before they are able to cause additional harm to themselves or others.

We are hopeful that after your careful review, your Committee will report this bill favorably for the consideration of the full House of Representatives.

Sincerely,



DAVE REICHERT
Member of Congress



BILL PASCRELL, JR
Member of Congress