



# Vermont Police Association

*Representing Vermont's Finest*

Post Office Box 83  
Northfield, Vermont 05663  
www.vtvpaa.org

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February 18, 2025

**To: Chairman Marc Mihaly and Members of the House Committee on General and Housing**

*Re: H.57, An act relating to survivor benefits for law enforcement officers*

Honorable Members of the House Committee on General and Housing,

Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. As the President of the Vermont Police Association, I am here reaffirming our strong support of legislation to ensure equitable survivor benefits for law enforcement officers who make the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

First, I would like to extend our sincere gratitude to members of the legislature for your hard work and support during the last legislative session. Your commitment to addressing this long-overdue issue has been invaluable, and we deeply appreciate the dedication to ensuring fairness for Vermont's first responders and their families. The hard work and commitment was asserted in the last session by the passing of this bill through two committees and the House without a single dissenting vote.

As you know, law enforcement officers put their lives on the line every day to protect and serve our communities. Tragically, as we have seen in the recent past, some pay the ultimate price. When an officer falls in the line of duty, it is not just a devastating loss for their family and colleagues, it is a loss felt by the entire community.

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Executive Committee Members

Vice-Presidents: 1<sup>st</sup> Tom Chenette Burl. PD, 2<sup>nd</sup> Kelly Price VT F&W

President Emeritus: Ben Herrick RCSD Secretary: Diane Shortsleeve SBPD (Ret.) Treasurer: Dan Boyer SBPD



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Yet, despite their sacrifice, our state's current first responder survivor benefits remain inequitable, leaving families with uncertainty during their most difficult moments. We have a moral obligation to correct this disparity and ensure all first responders' families receive the support and recognition they deserve.

I urge you once again to prioritize this important issue and move quickly in order for us to keep in the forefront of this legislative session a promise of ensuring the families of our fallen heroes are no longer left behind. By passing this legislation, we honor their service and send a much needed message demonstrating our unwavering commitment to those who risk their lives for the safety of all Vermonters.

Thank you for your time, your dedication, and your continued leadership in supporting Vermont's law enforcement professionals.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher R. Hoar  
President  
Vermont Police Association

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## ADDENDUM

**The Officer Down Memorial Page, Inc., (ODMP)** is a non-profit organization dedicated to honoring America's fallen law enforcement officers. More than 26,000 officers have died in the line of duty in the United States since 1776 and ODMP is honored to preserve their memories and give friends, family, other officers, and citizens alike the opportunity to remember the fallen and honor their sacrifices.

<https://www.odmp.org/search/browse/vermont>

Total line of duty deaths in Vermont: 29

First recorded: [Officer Thomas Hewlett](#) (1814)

Past twenty years: [Trooper Kyle Young](#) (2015), [Officer Jessica Ebbighausen](#) (2023)

**Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S.)** Yearly, C.O.P.S. compiles the state benefits available to surviving families. Benefits include education benefits, state benefits, worker's compensation, pension, funeral benefits and miscellaneous organizations who assist. Compiled below are the current benefit packages for New England states:

- ◇ In summary all New England states, except for Vermont, currently offer a death benefit to the surviving families of fallen law enforcement officers.

### **Vermont**

[https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/Vermont\\_2025.pdf](https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/Vermont_2025.pdf)

### **Connecticut**

[https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/Connecticut\\_2025.pdf](https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/Connecticut_2025.pdf)

### **Maine**

[https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/Maine\\_2025.pdf](https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/Maine_2025.pdf)

### **Massachusetts**

[https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/Massachusetts\\_2025.pdf](https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/Massachusetts_2025.pdf)

### **New Hampshire**

[https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/New\\_Hampshire\\_2025.pdf](https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/New_Hampshire_2025.pdf)

### **Rhode Island**

[https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/Rhode\\_Island\\_2025.pdf](https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/Rhode_Island_2025.pdf)

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