



Vermont Police Association

Representing Vermont's Finest

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

April 2, 2026

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

Re: S.89, An act relating to expanding survivor benefits

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.

I would like to reiterate 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 has been asserted in numerous sessions by the passing of this bill through multiple committees without a single dissenting vote I believe.

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.

Executive Committee Members

Vice-Presidents: 1st Tom Chenette VT DLL, 2nd Kelly Price VT F&W (Ret.)

President Emeritus: Ben Herrick RCSD **Secretary-Treasurer:** Dan Boyer CUSI **Sergeant-at-Arms:** Dale Kerber FPD



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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 ask 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

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President
Vermont Police Association

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ADDENDUM

Below is a compilation of the “on duty... special death benefits” certain state employees’ beneficiary may receive, in specific circumstances, in addition to any life insurance benefits generally provided by the state:

SOV / VTA - Article 43 Life Insurance, Subsection 8, Page 54,

“...shall pay a special death benefit equal to one-half of the death benefit provided under federal law...”

https://humanresources.vermont.gov/sites/humanresources/files/documents/DHR-VTA_Contract_2024_2026.pdf

SOV / DOC - Article 55 Life Insurance, Subsection 9, Page 68,

“...shall pay a fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) special death benefit...”

https://humanresources.vermont.gov/sites/humanresources/files/documents/DHR-Corrections_Contract_2024_2026.pdf

SOV / SUP - Article 54 Life Insurance, Subsection 8 & 9, Page 72,

“shall pay a special death benefit equal to one-half of the death benefit provided under federal law...” (VSP Lt.)

“shall pay a fifty thousand (\$50,000) special death benefit...” (DOC Sup)

https://humanresources.vermont.gov/sites/humanresources/files/documents/DHR-Supervisory_Contract_2024_2026.pdf

Below is a compilation of 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:

- All New England states, except for Vermont, currently offer a state death benefit to the surviving families.

Vermont

<https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/Vermont+2026.pdf>

Connecticut

<https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/Connecticut+2026.pdf>

Maine

<https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/Maine+2026.pdf>

Massachusetts

<https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/Massachusetts+2026.pdf>

New Hampshire

<https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/New+Hampshire+2026.pdf>

Rhode Island

<https://irp.cdn-website.com/ac5c0731/files/uploaded/Rhode+Island+2026.pdf>

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