



## DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

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### **Hawaii Attorney General Joins Coalition of Attorneys General Urging Congress to Pass Safeguarding America's First Responders Act**

HONOLULU – Hawaii Attorney General Clare E. Connors 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.

"It is critical we support our first responders," said Attorney General Connors. "We need to make sure our public safety officers know that government is there for them during this pandemic."

In a letter sent to Congress today, Attorney General Connors and 51 other state 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 entire letter, click [here](#).

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 is sponsored by Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa and Senator Cory Booker of New Jersey. It recently passed the United States Senate and is currently being considered by the House of Representatives.

To read the Act, click [here](#).

Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody and Washington, D.C. Attorney General Karl Racine co-sponsored the letter. The attorneys general joining the call to action include: Alaska, American Samoa, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Guam, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

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