

October 7, 2015

Jonathan Thompson
Executive Director
National Sheriffs' Association
1450 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mr. Thompson,

As you may be aware, a recent USA Today article drew attention to the long delays families of public safety officers face in receiving death benefits allocated through the Public Safety Officers' Benefit (PSOB) program. Two of the families featured in the story reside in my home state of Missouri. I am reaching out to you today in the hopes that you can direct families in my state that you know are awaiting resolution of a PSOB claim to my office so that we may assist them. I am hopeful that my advocacy in the cases impacting Missouri families will expedite their conclusion.

The Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Act provides benefits to the survivors of certain public safety officers who die in the performance of their duty. The program provides a one-time lump sum death benefit to eligible survivors when the death of an officer is the direct and proximate result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty or from certain line-of-duty heart attacks, strokes, and vascular ruptures. The program is vital to offering peace of mind to the brave men and women seeking careers in public safety and their families.

For years the program has been beset by long delays in awarding death benefits to families which only further compounds the grief and loss suffered by these families. These delays are simply unacceptable and I am working with my colleagues and the Department of Justice to resolve systemic issues plaguing the program.

At this time, I know that 11 Missouri families are awaiting a decision on their claim of death benefits, 2 of which have been open for more than 4 years. I am hoping that your organization, with its dedication to representing public safety officers and their families, would notify these Missouri families of my interest in assisting them in resolving these claims. My office is eager to support them in correcting these long delays.

Please direct any interested families to Samantha Brewer at Samantha_Brewer@mccaskill.senate.gov or 573-442-7130. Thank you for your dedication to not only the police officers who keep our communities safe, but to their families as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Claire McCaskill". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Claire" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "McCaskill".

Claire McCaskill
U.S. Senator