

## National Blue Alert Act of 2013

Each day, more than 900,000 federal, state, and local law enforcement officers put their lives on the line to keep our communities safe. Tragically, sometimes the unthinkable happens and a police officer is injured or killed in the line of duty by a violent criminal. In such instances, the quick dissemination of important, time-sensitive information about suspected criminals is essential to keeping our communities safe.

The National Blue Alert will encourage, enhance and integrate blue alert plans throughout the United States in order to effectively disseminate information notifying law enforcement, media and the public that a suspect is wanted in connection with an attack on a law enforcement officer.

A growing number of states (now 18) have established a Blue Alert system, including: Washington, California, Utah, Colorado, Oklahoma, Texas, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, Florida, Virginia, Maryland, Montana, and Delaware. However, there is no national Blue Alert system, nor is there a federal official designated to coordinate the Blue Alert program and share best practices among states.

Specifically, the National Blue Alert Act of 2013 directs the Justice Department to —

- Establish a national Blue Alert communications network within the Department of Justice (DOJ) to disseminate information when a law enforcement officer is seriously injured or killed in the line of duty, in coordination with federal, state, and local Blue Alert plans.
- Assign an existing DOJ officer to act as the national coordinator of the Blue Alert communications network. This coordinator will, among other things:
  - Provide assistance to states and local governments that are using Blue Alert plans;
  - establish voluntary guidelines for states and local governments to use in developing such plans;
  - ensure compliance with privacy laws and civil liberties protections;
  - develop protocols for efforts to apprehend suspects;
  - work with states to ensure appropriate regional coordination of various elements of the network;
  - act as the nationwide point of contact for the development of the network and the regional coordination of Blue Alerts through the network;
  - determine and share what procedures and best practices are in use for notifying law enforcement and the public when a law enforcement officer is killed or seriously injured in the line of duty; and
  - annually submit a report on the coordinator's activities and the effectiveness and status of the Blue Alert plans that are in effect or being developed.

This legislation is endorsed by the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Association of Police Organizations, and the Concerns of Police Survivors. For questions or to co-sponsor, contact Margot Hecht (Cardin) at 202-224-4524, [margot\\_hecht@cardin.senate.gov](mailto:margot_hecht@cardin.senate.gov) or David Glaccum (Graham) at 202-224-5973, [david\\_glaccum@judiciary-rep.senate.gov](mailto:david_glaccum@judiciary-rep.senate.gov).