



NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

JONATHAN F. THOMPSON
Executive Director

April 15, 2015

The Honorable Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cardin:

On behalf of the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA), I am writing to express our support for S. 665, the "Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu National Blue Alert Act of 2015."

Every year, federal, state and local law enforcement officers are killed or severely injured in the line of duty. In most states, there is currently no system to transmit information to the public on suspects after law enforcement officers have been seriously injured or killed. Unfortunately, this gives an opportunity for the suspects to avoid apprehension for days, and in some cases, months and years.

A national Blue Alert system would be designed to be compatible with the successful Amber Alert systems already in place nationwide. S. 665 would enable the Attorney General 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. Additionally, the bill establishes a national coordinator of the Blue Alert communications network within the DOJ, who will be tasked with encouraging states and local governments to develop additional Blue Alert plans; establishing voluntary guidelines for states and local governments to use in developing such plans; developing protocols for efforts to apprehend suspects; and establishing an advisory group to assist states, local governments, law enforcement agencies, and other entities in initiating, facilitating, and promoting Blue Alert plans.

Currently, multiple states have successful variations of the Blue Alert, and though other states are slowly seeing the benefits of implementing this type of system, the lack of a nationally linked system allows for suspects to avoid apprehension by escaping to another state. The National Sheriffs' Association believes that the ability to implement a national Blue Alert system will greatly help in the swift apprehension of suspects involved in officers' injuries or deaths and supports S. 665, the "Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu National Blue Alert Act of 2015."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan F. Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jonathan F. Thompson