

**Responses of Denise Ellen O'Donnell
Nominee to be the Director of the Bureau of Justice Assistance
to the Written Questions for the Record
from Chairman Patrick J. Leahy**

1. I am a strong supporter of the Public Safety Officers Benefits (PSOB) Act, and was proud to sponsor the Hometown Heroes Survivors Benefits Act, which expanded the PSOB program. Just recently, the Senate passed the Dale Long Emergency Medical Service Provider Protection Act, which expands the PSOB program to cover medical first responders who work for private, non-profit entities that serve our communities. I believe very strongly that the PSOB laws should work fairly and efficiently for our first responders who are disabled or killed in the line of duty. In 2007, the Judiciary Committee held a hearing to examine why the families of so many first responders were experiencing terrible delays and roadblocks in getting the benefits Congress intended. Positive changes were made as a result of that hearing, and I want that progress to continue.

If you are confirmed as the Director of the Bureau of Justice Assistance, will you make a commitment to work hard to ensure that the PSOB program works efficiently and that all claimants are treated fairly and respectfully?

Response: I appreciate your focus on the importance of the Public Safety Officers Benefits (PSOB) Program. In my view, there is nothing more important than our commitment to our first responders who are disabled or killed in the line of duty and to their families. If I am confirmed as Director of the Bureau of Justice Assistance, I will do my very best to ensure the efficient administration of the PSOB program and the fair and respectful treatment of PSOB claimants.