

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CIVIL SERVICE AND AGENCY REORGANIZATION
CONGRESSWOMAN JO ANN DAVIS, CHAIRWOMAN



PRESS RELEASE

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***Chairwoman Jo Ann Davis Urges Review of
Federal Law Enforcement Compensation***

Washington, D.C. – Congresswoman Jo Ann Davis (R-Va.) today introduced legislation requiring the federal government to conduct a study reviewing pay and benefits for the federal government’s 129,000 law enforcement officers.

The goals of the study are to eliminate pay disparities among various law enforcement agencies, to improve recruitment and retention of officers, and to make sure the federal government is keeping pace with state and local law enforcement units in terms of compensation.

The creation of the Transportation Security Administration following the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks led many federal law enforcement officers to take jobs with the new agency, citing better pay and benefits. Unfortunately, this left other federal law enforcement agencies short-handed, and many still report recruiting problems. In addition, the Homeland Security Department – home to about half the federal government’s law enforcement officers -- is in the process of developing a new pay system that could once again attract officers away from other federal agencies.

Congresswoman Davis’s legislation, the “Federal Law Enforcement Pay and Benefits Parity Act of 2003,” along with a companion bill introduced today by Senator George Voinovich (R-Ohio), is designed to help erase the recruitment and retention problems facing many federal law enforcement agencies. As the chairwoman of the House Government Reform Subcommittee on Civil Service and Agency Organization, Congresswoman Davis held a July 23rd hearing on the subject of law enforcement compensation.

“As our hearing showed, the federal government is facing a serious problem in keeping our valuable law enforcement officers, and in many areas, we are not competitive with local forces in the search for new talent,” Chairwoman Davis said. “As a first step, we must have the Office of Personnel Management conduct a detailed analysis of the problem and offer some recommendations as to fixing the problem.”

The legislation does the following two things: 1) requires the Office of Personnel Management review the classification, compensation and benefits of federal law enforcement officers, and requires OPM to recommend possible remedies; and 2) adds a specific requirement for an employee exchange program among federal, state and local law enforcement officers, as a way of sharing best practices and maintaining a well-trained force.

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