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FINDINGS AND PURPOSE OF 1998 AMENDMENTS

Pub. L. 105-181, §2, June 16, 1998, 112 Stat. 512, provided that:

"(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

"(1) the number of law enforcement officers who are killed in the line of duty would significantly decrease if every law enforcement officer in the United States had the protection of an armor vest;

"(2) according to studies, between 1985 and 1994, 709 law enforcement officers in the United States were feloniously killed in the line of duty;

"(3) the Federal Bureau of Investigation estimates that the risk of fatality to law enforcement officers while not wearing an armor vest is 14 times higher than for officers wearing an armor vest;

"(4) the Department of Justice estimates that approximately 150,000 State, local, and tribal law enforcement officers, nearly 25 percent, are not issued body armor;

"(5) according to studies, between 1985 and 1994, bullet-resistant materials helped save the lives of more than 2,000 law enforcement officers in the United States; and

"(6) the Executive Committee for Indian Country Law Enforcement Improvements reports that violent crime in Indian country has risen sharply, despite a decrease in the national crime rate, and has concluded that there is a 'public safety crisis in Indian country'.

"(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act [see Short Title of 1998 Amendments note set out under section 3711 of this title] is to save lives of law enforcement officers by helping State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies provide officers with armor vests."

§ 3796II-1. Applications

(a) In general

To request a grant under this subchapter, the chief executive of a State, unit of local government, or Indian tribe shall submit an application to the Director of the Bureau of Justice Assistance in such form and containing such information as the Director may reasonably require.

(b) Regulations

Not later than 90 days after June 16, 1998, the Director of the Bureau of Justice Assistance shall promulgate regulations to implement this section (including the information that must be included and the requirements that the States, units of local government, and Indian tribes must meet) in submitting the applications required under this section.

(c) Eligibility

A unit of local government that receives funding under the Local Law Enforcement Block Grant program (described under the heading "Violent Crime Reduction Programs, State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance" of the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998 (Public Law 105-119)) during a fiscal year in which it submits an application under this subchapter shall not be eligible for a grant under this subchapter unless the chief executive officer of such unit of local government certifies and provides an explanation to the Director that the unit of local government considered or will consider using funding received under the block grant program for any or all of the costs relat-

ing to the purchase of armor vests, but did not, or does not expect to use such funds for such purpose.

(d) Applications in conjunction with purchases

If an application under this section is submitted in conjunction with a transaction for the purchase of armor vests, grant amounts under this section may not be used to fund any portion of that purchase unless, before the application is submitted, the applicant—

(1) receives clear and conspicuous notice that receipt of the grant amounts requested in the application is uncertain; and

(2) expressly assumes the obligation to carry out the transaction, regardless of whether such amounts are received.

(Pub. L. 90-351, title I, §2502, as added Pub. L. 105-181, §3(a)(3), June 16, 1998, 112 Stat. 514; amended Pub. L. 106-517, §3(c), Nov. 13, 2000, 114 Stat. 2408.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998, referred to in subsec. (c), is Pub. L. 105-119, Nov. 26, 1997, 111 Stat. 2440. Provisions under the heading "Violent Crime Reduction Programs, State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance", 111 Stat. 2452, are not classified to the Code.

AMENDMENTS

2000—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 106-517 added subsec. (d).

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

Effective Aug. 1, 2000, all functions of Director of Bureau of Justice Assistance, other than those enumerated in section 3742(3) through (6) of this title, transferred to Assistant Attorney General for Office of Justice Programs, see section 1000(a)(1) [title I, §108(b)] of Pub. L. 106-113, set out as a note under section 3741 of this title.

§ 3796II-2. Definitions

For purposes of this subchapter—

(1) the term "armor vest" means—

(A) body armor, no less than Type I, which has been tested through the voluntary compliance testing program operated by the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center of the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), and found to meet or exceed the requirements of NIJ Standard 0101.03, or any subsequent revision of such standard; or

(B) body armor that has been tested through the voluntary compliance testing program, and found to meet or exceed the requirements of NIJ Standard 0115.00, or any revision of such standard;

(2) the term "body armor" means any product sold or offered for sale as personal protective body covering intended to protect against gunfire, stabbing, or other physical harm;

(3) the term "State" means each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands;

(4) the term "unit of local government" means a county, municipality, town, township, village, parish, borough, or other unit of general government below the State level;

(5) the term “Indian tribe” has the same meaning as in section 450b(e) of title 25; and

(6) the term “law enforcement officer” means any officer, agent, or employee of a State, unit of local government, or Indian tribe authorized by law or by a government agency to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, or investigation of any violation of criminal law, or authorized by law to supervise sentenced criminal offenders.

(Pub. L. 90-351, title I, §2503, as added Pub. L. 105-181, §3(a)(3), June 16, 1998, 112 Stat. 514; amended Pub. L. 106-517, §3(d), Nov. 13, 2000, 114 Stat. 2408.)

AMENDMENTS

2000—Par. (1). Pub. L. 106-517 designated provisions after “‘armor vest’ means” as subpar. (A) and added subpar. (B).

INTERIM DEFINITION OF ARMOR VEST

Pub. L. 106-517, §3(e), Nov. 13, 2000, 114 Stat. 2408, provided that: “For purposes of part Y of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 [42 U.S.C. 3796ll et seq.], as amended by this Act, the meaning of the term ‘armor vest’ (as defined in section 2503 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 3796ll-2)) shall, until the date on which a final NIJ Standard 0115.00 is first fully approved and implemented, also include body armor which has been found to meet or exceed the requirements for protection against stabbing established by the State in which the grantee is located.”

§ 3796ll-3. James Guelff and Chris McCurley Body Armor Act of 2002

(a) Short title

This section may be cited as the “James Guelff and Chris McCurley Body Armor Act of 2002”.

(b) Findings

Congress finds that—

(1) nationally, police officers and ordinary citizens are facing increased danger as criminals use more deadly weaponry, body armor, and other sophisticated assault gear;

(2) crime at the local level is exacerbated by the interstate movement of body armor and other assault gear;

(3) there is a traffic in body armor moving in or otherwise affecting interstate commerce, and existing Federal controls over such traffic do not adequately enable the States to control this traffic within their own borders through the exercise of their police power;

(4) recent incidents, such as the murder of San Francisco Police Officer James Guelff by an assailant wearing 2 layers of body armor, a 1997 bank shoot out in north Hollywood, California, between police and 2 heavily armed suspects outfitted in body armor, and the 1997 murder of Captain Chris McCurley of the Etowah County, Alabama Drug Task Force by a drug dealer shielded by protective body armor, demonstrate the serious threat to community safety posed by criminals who wear body armor during the commission of a violent crime;

(5) of the approximately 1,500 officers killed in the line of duty since 1980, more than 30 percent could have been saved by body armor, and the risk of dying from gunfire is 14 times higher for an officer without a bulletproof vest;

(6) the Department of Justice has estimated that 25 percent of State and local police are not issued body armor;

(7) the Federal Government is well-equipped to grant local police departments access to body armor that is no longer needed by Federal agencies; and

(8) Congress has the power, under the interstate commerce clause and other provisions of the Constitution of the United States, to enact legislation to regulate interstate commerce that affects the integrity and safety of our communities.

(c) Definitions

In this section:

(1) Body armor

The term “body armor” means any product sold or offered for sale, in interstate or foreign commerce, as personal protective body covering intended to protect against gunfire, regardless of whether the product is to be worn alone or is sold as a complement to another product or garment.

(2) Law enforcement agency

The term “law enforcement agency” means an agency of the United States, a State, or a political subdivision of a State, authorized by law or by a government agency to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, investigation, or prosecution of any violation of criminal law.

(3) Law enforcement officer

The term “law enforcement officer” means any officer, agent, or employee of the United States, a State, or a political subdivision of a State, authorized by law or by a government agency to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, investigation, or prosecution of any violation of criminal law.

(d) Amendment of sentencing guidelines with respect to body armor

(1) In general

Pursuant to its authority under section 994(p) of title 28, the United States Sentencing Commission shall review and amend the Federal sentencing guidelines and the policy statements of the Commission, as appropriate, to provide an appropriate sentencing enhancement for any crime of violence (as defined in section 16 of title 18) or drug trafficking crime (as defined in section 924(c) of title 18) (including a crime of violence or drug trafficking crime that provides for an enhanced punishment if committed by the use of a deadly or dangerous weapon or device) in which the defendant used body armor.

(2) Sense of Congress

It is the sense of Congress that any sentencing enhancement under this subsection should be at least 2 levels.

(e) Omitted

(f) Donation of Federal surplus body armor

(1) Definitions

In this subsection, the terms “Federal agency” and “surplus property” have the meanings given such terms under section 102 of title 40.