

The Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act

U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin

Our nation's first responders risk their lives every day to protect and serve the public. However, many of these public safety personnel are denied basic labor protections that nearly every other occupation enjoys. Extending these rights to public safety officers will not only do right by those who protect our communities, it will also foster an improved relationship with their employers. Senator Baldwin's bill requires that all firefighters, police officers and EMS are provided the ability to form and join a labor union. Additionally, they must be allowed to collectively bargain over hours, wages and terms and conditions of employment. The legislation gives states that do not currently provide these protections two years to comply.

The bill does not supersede any local laws that have "comparable to or greater than" collective bargaining rights currently enshrined in local law. Further, existing collective bargaining agreements established on or before enactment of this law will not be affected.

The House version of this legislation is led by Representatives Dan Kildee (D-MI) and John Duncan (R-TN).

This legislation is supported by Professional Firefighters of Wisconsin (PFFW), Wisconsin Professional Police Association (WPPA), Milwaukee Police Association, Wisconsin Law Enforcement Association, International Association of Firefighters (IAFF), Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), International Union of Police Association (IUAP), United Steelworkers, AFL-CIO, AFSCME, National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE), and CWA.

Read more about what our law enforcement partners are saying about the *Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act*:

"In Wisconsin, we know firsthand the importance of collective bargaining and the right to form and join unions. We stand with our brothers and sisters across the country who are not afforded those same basic rights. Senator Baldwin has long been a champion of Wisconsin's firefighters and we deeply appreciate her leadership on this issue," **said Mahlon Mitchell, President of Professional Firefighters of Wisconsin.**

"Every day, law enforcement officers risk their lives to keep our communities safe. Extending the same basic labor protections enjoyed by nearly every other occupation to police officers would benefit both public safety and officer safety. This legislation would give the dedicated men and women that police our streets the voice they deserve to advance their working conditions, their ability to get the resources they need to most effectively serve the public, and the future of the law enforcement profession as a whole. We commend Senator Baldwin for being a leader in this arena and a valued friend of our law enforcement community," **said Jim Palmer, Executive Director of Wisconsin Professional Police Association.**

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“The IAFF is proud to see Senator Baldwin introduce the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act, a bill that will give basic collective bargaining rights to fire fighters and other public safety workers who do not have a say in their own personal safety or that of the people they protect. Senator Baldwin has a long history of fighting for and standing with working Americans. Her decision to take the lead on behalf of fire fighters provides a needed voice for the hard-working men and women who dedicate their careers to keeping their communities safe. We look forward to working alongside the Senator and our other allies to help move this important legislation forward,” **said Harold Schaitberger, General President of the International Association of Firefighters.**

“As law enforcement officers, we take our oath and commitment to protect and serve very seriously. Public safety occupations are unique, and their labor relations need to reflect that. Ours is not the traditional labor-management relationship. In our line of work, the bottom line is the safety of the public and of the officer. Law enforcement officers protecting our communities should be afforded the same basic labor protections that are extended to millions of other Americans. The right to collectively bargain over wages, hours, and terms of employment. We are proud to be strong supporters of the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act and we are deeply grateful to Senator Baldwin for her leadership and commitment to our nation’s law enforcement officers,” **said Chuck Canterbury, National President of the Fraternal Order of Police. The Fraternal Order of Police is the nation’s oldest and largest law enforcement organization representing more than 335,000 members in every region of the country.**

“Federal law has extended collective bargaining to several different sectors, but not to public safety officers. There are many law enforcement officers who put their lives on the line every day to preserve the security and peace that our nation enjoys. However, these same officers are denied the basic American rights of collective bargaining for wages, hours, and safe working conditions. We strongly believe that the public safety is best protected through effective partnerships between first responders on the front lines and the agencies that employ them. The Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act will ensure that public safety officers can meet with local officials to discuss how they do their jobs and how best to protect the public. We thank Senator Baldwin for championing this important issue,” **said Bill Johnson, Executive Director of the National Association of Police Organizations.**