



Senator Herb Kohl

United States Senator for Wisconsin



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We owe our law enforcement officers a great debt of gratitude for the work they do every day – keeping our communities safe and enforcing the law. They put themselves in harm’s way to help others and it is essential that we offer them the best and most effective protection. I believe that no officer should be without a bulletproof vest.

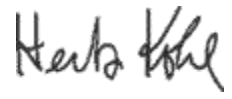
Since 1999, I have been a strong supporter of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Act which has provided funding to state and local police and sheriff’s departments across the country and in Wisconsin for more than 32,000 bulletproof vests. The Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program needs to be reauthorized this year and I will be supporting legislation to do that. Today the Senate Judiciary Committee brought together law enforcement experts who discussed policies and funding for bulletproof vests. I spoke in support of this important partnership and asked questions on behalf of Wisconsin law enforcement and their families. The current state of affairs is alarming. Due to funding shortages and budget cuts, some departments are increasingly putting the financial burden on the officers to purchase their own vests.

We must do all we can to ensure that all jurisdictions large and small are able to buy bulletproof vests that fit well and do not inhibit their performance. These vests are a fundamental part of keeping officers safe in the line of duty.

There is no question that bulletproof vests save lives. For example, last March a 9-year veteran of the Fond du Lac, Wisconsin Police Department was shot twice in the chest as he responded to a call. Fortunately, the officer had chosen to wear a bulletproof vest even though his department did not require it. The vest saved his life.

We need to do all we can to make vests available for the men and women who risk their lives to protect us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Herb Kohl". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "H" and "K".