

Today we honor all the men and women who have been called to their eternal resting place while serving in the line of duty.

In 2016 there were 145 men and women killed in the line of duty. We began 2017 National Police Week with 47 line of duty deaths and as I speak today it is with a heavy heart there are now 50. To date this year law enforcement deaths are up 35%. These brave and courageous men and women were fathers, mothers, daughters, sons, sisters, and brothers, and friends.

Each day officers patrol their city, county, and state, with the mindset to protect their communities, we lace up our boots, put on our vests, and make sure our gear is ready for whatever may come our way. We do not question the dangers we know we may face, we pray for strength and courage to face the unknown and to come home to our loved ones at the end of our tour. We can be called the most wretched of names or be met by the embrace of a child who wanted to thank us for our service.

As Police officers we run towards the dangers and unknown variables all while knowing it could be our final call for service. We do so in order to preserve life and to preserve the future of others. We do this for our communities we serve and hold sacred.

We often refer to the thin blue line family. That thin blue line represents the officers courage deep within when faced with insurmountable odds. It is separating the good from bad while creating order from chaos. It is a family of all who wear the badge.

Today we honor the sacrifice, courage, strength, commitment, and integrity of those who have met their final call.