

Congressman David Dreier H.R. 2363, the Peace Officer Justice Act Summary

Murdering a law enforcement officer is one of the most heinous crimes one can commit. Peace officers are dedicated to upholding the law and put themselves at great risk protecting the public.

Under current law, it is a federal crime to kill a federal law enforcement officer and peace officers engaged in a federal crime investigation. H.R. 2363, the "Peace Officer Justice Act," makes it a federal crime to murder a peace officer -- whether federal, state or local -- and flee the country, providing concurrent jurisdiction for the federal government to prosecute the suspect. The bill will:

- Ensure that criminals who murder law enforcement officials and flee the country to avoid prosecution will have the full weight of the federal government on their trail; and
- Provide another “tool in the tool box” to bring these criminals to justice.
- Under Title 18 USC 1073, it is already a federal crime to flee to another state or foreign country to avoid prosecution. The Peace Officer Justice Act simply extends this concept by making it a federal crime to kill a peace officer and flee the country, with penalties that match the seriousness of this crime.

Specifically, the measure would amend Title 18, Section 1121 by inserting:

- *Whoever intentionally kills any peace officer engaged in, or on account of the performance of, such officer's official duties, and moves or travels in foreign commerce with intent to avoid prosecution or confinement after conviction of that crime, shall be sentenced according to the terms of section 1111.*
- *The term "peace officer" means any officer of the United States, a State, or a political subdivision of a State who is empowered by law to conduct investigations of or to make arrests for offenses against the criminal laws of the United States, the State, or the political subdivision.*