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March 22, 2021

Senator John Cornyn
517 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 2010

Dear Senator Cornyn,

On behalf of the National Association of Assistant United States Attorneys (NAAUSA), representing the interests of the 6,300 Assistant U.S. Attorneys (AUSAs) working in the 93 U.S. Attorney Offices, I write to express our support for the Jaime Zapata and Victor Avila Federal Law Enforcement Protection Act.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys (AUSAs) are often stationed abroad alongside various federal law enforcement components to assist with prosecution of international criminals, including transnational criminal organizations. The assignments involve close inspection of some of our world's most dangerous and well connected criminals. Additionally, AUSAs are targets in volatile nations simply due to their affiliation with the U.S. government. As seen in the tragic attack on Jaime Zapata and Victor Avila, these risks can materialize with tragic consequences.

Despite the risks of serving abroad, AUSAs and thousands of other federal employees and federal law enforcement officers accept these positions out of a genuine desire to administer justice and serve the interests of the American people. Unfortunately, the gap in federal protections which prevents the prosecution of crimes against federal officers and employees abroad leaves federal officials abroad open without the backing of their government.

This legislation effectively closes that gap in federal protections and institutes a deterrent against attacks on federal officials abroad. We thank you for introducing this bipartisan legislation and supporting the safety and security of federal law enforcement and, indeed, all federal employees.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue. Please reach out to NAAUSA's Washington Representative Jason Briefel (jbriefel@shawbransford.com) if we can be of any assistance in getting this legislation passed.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lawrence J. Leiser".

Lawrence J. Leiser
President