Title of bill

H.R.119 - National Statistics on Deadly Force Transparency Act of 2019

Summary

This bill would require law enforcement agencies to collect, aggregate, and submit data on the use of deadly force by law enforcement officers to the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice would be authorized to reduce funds to state or local law enforcement agencies that fail to comply with the requirement.

Goal of the bill

To provide aggregate information on the use of deadly force to Congress and the public.

Objectives of the bill

1. Provide a framework for the type of data to collect, compile, and submit as well what data is not to be collected for this requirement;
2. Designate Department of Justice with the responsibility for determining a collection instrument, housing the data collected, reporting what was collected, and sanctioning any law enforcement agencies who do not comply with this requirement.

Activities

1. Write regulations for data collection, compiling of data, reporting out of data, and data retention/storage

Zero-measurement: no regulations written within 3 months of bill being passed;

1. Issue regulations for data collection, compiling, reporting and storage of data

Zero-measurement: no regulations issued within 6 months of bill being passed;

1. Create an electronic reporting system for law enforcement agencies to use to report required information.

Zero-measurement: no electronic reporting system developed and ready for use within 6 months of bill being passed;

1. Report to Congress and make data available to the public annually

Zero-measurement: no report to congress or data available to the public within 1 year of regulations being issued.

Method instruments (all alternatives) and performance

1. Update an electronic collection system that is already in use and make it available to all law enforcement agencies

Critical success factors: 85% of all law enforcement agencies will have created accounts/users for electronic collection system within 6 months of bill being passed.

1. Develop, test and go live with a new electronic system

Critical success factors: Electronic reporting system is live, and usable on all platforms and available within 6 months of bill being issued.

1. Regulations written, approved and issued to all federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies

Critical success factors: regulations are approved and issued to all law enforcement agencies with clear understanding of requirements and deadlines.

1. Create report and presentation for Congress and the public.

Critical success factors: Reports are prepared on-time, presented to Congress and the public within 1 year of regulations being issued.

Context and conceptual framework

1. Theories and assumptions: law enforcement agencies may feel they are already reporting this information in a variety of other ways; that one more way is not needed.
2. Theories and assumptions: that the data collected may be personally identifiable for both victim and law enforcement officer
3. Theories and assumptions: what will the data be ultimately used for isn’t clear beyond reporting pieces.

Evaluation

My recommendation would be to not vote to pass this bill. There are voluntary law enforcement data collection systems already in place. This proposed bill feels like a burden to add to the already heavy data system in place. Perhaps a new bill that is makes the voluntary data collection system(s) mandatory; that provides a clearer picture of how the data collected will be used. Streamlining data collection that is already in place would ease the paperwork burden many agencies feel and use resources already in place instead of creating more.