

For the Fresno Deputy Sheriff's Association, May is always a time for solemn reflection and deep gratitude. It's a moment for us to pause and take in the weight of the badge and the sacrifices made by those whose lives were cut short in service to others.

Each year, we pay tribute to these officers in Sacramento and in Fresno. It's so important that we never forget those who heroically gave all and the families they left behind. I honor the memory of our fallen deputies by being purposeful and mailing a personal note to one of their loved ones on the anniversary of their death. This is just a small way to acknowledge the pain and void but most importantly that they aren't forgotten. So much of our daily lives can be consumed by the pace of this profession and how busy it can be, so it's meaningful to stop to remember the realities of it, the pain that some people feel each day. In addition, we can honor their memory not just in words, but in our actions everyday as we continue to serve and protect our community.

### **PEACE OFFICER MEMORIAL WEEK/LOBBY TRIP TO DC**

May is also Peace Officer Memorial month. I was honored to spend a portion of the first week of May in Washington DC. The purpose of traveling there was to advocate for law enforcement. Alongside Peace Officer Research Association of California (PORAC), we formed a Western States Coalition, uniting voices from California, Washington, Oregon, Alaska, and Hawaii.

During our visit, we engaged in over 40 meetings over two days, discussing crucial bills and topics affecting law enforcement. From WEP/GPO, Medicare age for peace officers, mental health integration with law enforcement (MH Program), childcare support for law enforcement, and recruitment and retention initiatives. Our discussions resonated with both congressional delegates and senators from across the nation.

PORAC hosted a reception that was well attended and a highlight of the trip. It was especially good to have conversations with Congressman Peters from San Diego and Congressman David Valadao. This event provided invaluable opportunities for one-on-one conversations and enhanced networking among the congressional delegation.

Overall, our trip was exceptionally successful, further solidifying our commitment to advocating for the needs and rights of law enforcement officers on both state and national levels.

### **DIGGING DEEPER INTO OUR MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

This month, I will be sharing information about uniform allowances, a provision important to ensure deputies are equipped with the necessary attire to fulfill their duties effectively and professionally. Below please see more about the policy that addresses the guidelines and benefits of our uniform allowance. I am addressing this after fielding a lot of questions regarding the new outer carrier vests that were approved a couple months back. The new vest is expensive. I have spoke to Sheriff Zanoni about the phasing out of the current tan outer carrier vest. The Sheriff is willing to leave that vest in place for phasing it out until September 1, 2025. That gives people plenty of time who currently have it, to use your uniform allowance to purchase the new green vest carrier. Remember this is not mandatory, just another option for you all.

## ARTICLE 11

### UNIFORM ALLOWANCE

A uniform allowance of \$38.46 per pay period shall be provided for qualifying employees in the Community Service Officer and Deputy Sheriff classification series within the Sheriff's Office. The uniform allowance for Non-Class A/B Uniform Personnel (no dispatch), is \$13.46 per pay period. The allowance will continue during periods of paid time off; however, the allowance will be discontinued when the entire pay period consists of dock time or other unpaid time off.

### **In Closing**

As I close out the message this month, I wanted to take a moment to thank you for the love and support you have given to my family during the past months. As many of you know, my 10-year-old nephew was killed on March 8<sup>th</sup>, vehicle versus pedestrian, while at his younger brother's baseball practice in Sanger. Just a few days earlier, my father-in-law passed away. I am sharing this with you because the calls, texts, flowers, cards, and meals have truly sustained us. I am so appreciative and grateful for the kindness so many of you have shown to our family. As you can imagine, it's been traumatic, heartbreaking, and many days, we still can't believe it. A lot of you have asked what you can do- and if you could just continue to pray for my sister and brother-in-law that would mean the most.

Thank you all for showing up every day and continuing to serve.

With tremendous gratitude,

Eric