



MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

March 19, 2021

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The Honorable John Cornyn
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cornyn,

I'm writing on behalf of the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA), a professional organization of police executives representing the largest cities in the United States and Canada. The MCCA is proud to support the *Jamie Zapata and Victor Avila Federal Law Enforcement Protection Act*, and thanks you for reintroducing this important piece of legislation in the 117th Congress.

In 2011, a drug cartel hit squad ambushed ICE Special Agents Jamie Zapata and Victor Avila while on assignment in Mexico. Special Agent Avila was seriously wounded, and sadly, Special Agent Zapata was killed in the attack. Last year, the D.C. Circuit court vacated these dangerous cartel members' convictions after finding that the statute they violated (18. U.S.C. §1114) by murdering Agent Zapata does not apply extraterritorially.¹

The *Jamie Zapata and Victor Avila Federal Law Enforcement Protection Act* will close this loophole by clarifying that 18. U.S.C. §1114 applies to crimes committed overseas. The bill will serve as a strong deterrent and send a clear message—if you harm our brave federal law enforcement officers or public servants abroad, you will be held accountable.

The MCCA encourages Congress to honor Special Agents Zapata and Avila by swiftly enacting this bill. Please do not hesitate to contact me at art.acevedo@houstonpolice.org if the MCCA can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Chief Art Acevedo
Chief, Houston Police Department
President, Major Cities Chiefs Association

Calgary, Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta
Montreal, Québec
Ottawa, Ontario
Peel Region, Ontario
Toronto, Ontario
Vancouver, B.C.
Winnipeg, Manitoba
York Region, Ontario

¹ Charles Doyle, "Court Tosses Conviction for Killing ICE Agent Abroad" *Congressional Research Service*, February 6, 2020.