

Sept 30 2005 - Slaughter Badge and Uniform Amendment Passes House

Slaughter Badge and Uniform Amendment Passes House

Bill Was Introduced in Response to Shooting at Xerox Federal Credit Union

Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28), Ranking Member of the House Rules Committee, is pleased to announce that on Wednesday, the House voted to include her Badge and Uniform Security and Trustworthiness (BUST) Act in the Justice Department Reauthorization Act.

"Our children deserve better than to have to think twice when they see a person in uniform," Rep. Slaughter said. "Violent criminals have had easy access to public uniforms, badges, and, therefore, our trust for too long. My bill will prevent those who wish to use the esteem we grant to our public officials as a tool to cause damage and destruction," she added.

Rep. Slaughter's amendment expands the current federal criminal ban on fake police badges and the misuse of authentic badges to include the uniforms, identification, and all other insignia of all public officials. The use of such badges, uniforms, and insignia would be permitted for dramatic, decorative, display, and recreational purposes. Rep. Slaughter has been fighting for over a year and half to pass this legislation.

"Terrorists are in a constant pursuit of tools and weapons to carry out their deadly plots," Rep. Slaughter said. "It is already too easy for them to obtain guns in this country. We cannot afford to look the other way while those who seek to do us harm further arm themselves with the public's confidence by displaying a phony badge or wearing a law enforcement uniform," she added.

Crimes committed by individuals impersonating officials in uniform are alarmingly common. Two years ago, the Xerox Employee Credit Union in Webster, NY was robbed, and two people were shot, by a man wearing an FBI jacket and carrying a badge. One of the victims died as a result of the shooting, and the perpetrator remains at large. In 2003, a college student in Colorado was abducted and murdered by a man posing as a police officer. In New York City earlier this year, Department of Homeland Security agents arrested an individual who was in the possession of an arsenal of weapons, 1,300 law enforcement badges, and two police uniforms.