

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4305

To improve the effectiveness of body armor issued to female agents and officers of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 9, 2024

Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mrs. BRITT) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To improve the effectiveness of body armor issued to female agents and officers of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “DHS Better Ballistic
5 Body Armor Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

8 (a) **BALLISTIC RESISTANT BODY ARMOR.**—The term
9 “ballistic resistant body armor” means torso ballistic pro-

1 tection containing soft ballistic panels, hard ballistic pan-
2 els, or a combination of both, contained within a carrier,
3 which may be concealable for wear under a uniform shirt
4 or external for wear over a uniform shirt, and holds panels
5 and plates in position on the torso.

6 (b) DEPARTMENT.—The term “Department” means
7 the Department of Homeland Security.

8 (c) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the
9 Secretary of Homeland Security.

10 **SEC. 3. PROCUREMENT OF BALLISTIC RESISTANT BODY**
11 **ARMOR TO ENSURE THE PROTECTION OF**
12 **THE DEPARTMENT’S FEMALE AGENTS AND**
13 **OFFICERS.**

14 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall require com-
15 ponents of the Department, when procuring ballistic re-
16 sistant body armor for individuals whose body shapes are
17 most closely associated with female agents and officers,
18 to procure ballistic resistant body armor that—

19 (1) is specifically designed to fully protect body
20 shapes most closely associated with female agents
21 and officers;

22 (2) is made to conform to the individual wearer
23 and provide the best possible fit and coverage to
24 allow for either a flat or shaped front panel;

1 (3) is assessed and verified, upon delivery, to fit
2 properly and have sufficient coverage in accordance
3 with American Society for Testing and Materials
4 (ASTM International) standards for fit;

5 (4) has enhanced and advanced fit and tech-
6 nology that stops a bullet from skipping off the
7 chest at an upward angle into the throat region or
8 the spinal cord area; and

9 (5) is certified by the National Institute of Jus-
10 tice (referred to in this paragraph as “NIJ”), pursu-
11 ant to the NIJ standard for ballistic resistant body
12 armor, and listed on the associated NIJ Compliant
13 Products List as successfully passing the ballistic re-
14 sistant body armor standards in accordance with the
15 applicable ballistic protection level recommended by
16 the NIJ, including passing testing that uses—

17 (A) ballistic testing on gender-specific clay
18 or gelatin molds to ensure better contact of
19 nonplanar panels with clay or gelatin molds;

20 (B) soft body armor front panels contained
21 in soft carriers on female-shaped clay or gelatin
22 molds designed to fill the space behind the
23 panel;

24 (C) shots to be placed on shaping features;

25 (D) angled shots; and

1 (E) an angled shot at the chest that tests
2 the concerns of bullet skipping into the neckline
3 of each test sample to address the concern of a
4 bullet skipping.

5 (b) ANNUAL REPORTS.—

6 (1) ISSUANCE OF BALLISTIC RESISTANT BODY
7 ARMOR.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the
8 enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for
9 the following 2 years, the head of each relevant com-
10 ponent agency of the Department shall submit a re-
11 port to the Secretary regarding the ballistic resistant
12 body armor issued to female agents and officers of
13 such component agency, including, with respect to
14 the reporting period—

15 (A) the number of female agents and offi-
16 cers to whom ballistic resistant body armor was
17 issued for performance of their official duties;

18 (B) the number of ballistic resistant body
19 armor units the use of which was discontinued
20 due to noncompliance with the requirements de-
21 scribed in subsection (a);

22 (C) the number of ballistic resistant body
23 armor units issued to female agents and officers
24 that are compliant with the requirements de-
25 scribed in subsection (a); and

1 (D) the percentage of female agents and
2 officers of such component agency who, as of
3 the last day of the reporting period, have been
4 issued and are regularly using ballistic resistant
5 body armor that complies with the requirements
6 described in subsection (a), disaggregated by
7 duty station.

8 (2) AGGREGATE REPORT.—Not later than 30
9 days after receiving all of the reports required to be
10 submitted under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall
11 submit a report that aggregates all of the data con-
12 tained in such reports to the Committee on Home-
13 land Security and Governmental Affairs of the Sen-
14 ate and the Committee on Homeland Security of the
15 House of Representatives.

16 **SEC. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

17 Not later than 3 years after the date of the enact-
18 ment of this Act, all agents and officers of any component
19 of the Department who have a body shape most closely
20 associated with female agents and officers shall have been
21 issued body armor that meets the requirements described
22 in section 3(a).

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