



New lottery game to benefit families of fallen police officers

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CHICAGO — Gov. Bruce Rauner today signed a bill to create a new Illinois Lottery scratch-off game from which proceeds will fund police memorials, support for the families of officers killed or severely injured in the line of duty, and protective vest replacements for officers.

“Our police officers stand in the face of danger every day to keep us safe. We are proud to stand with them and support their families when they are faced with a devastating loss,” Rauner said. “This new ticket will help fund scholarships for their children and honor their bravery at memorial parks across the state.”

House Republican Leader Jim Durkin, R-Western Springs, along with prominent police memorial funds, pushed forward House Bill 5513, which creates the police memorial instant ticket and requires that net proceeds go to the Criminal Justice Information Projects Fund. The funds are then to be divided equally among the Chicago Police Memorial Foundation Fund, the Police Memorial Committee Fund, and the Illinois State Police Memorial Fund.

The three designated police memorial funds provide support to families of officers who have been killed or severely injured in the line of duty.

“Our police officers wake up every day and put their lives on the line to ensure the safety and security of their citizens and communities,” Durkin said. “It is our duty to help them and their families when they are catastrophically hurt protecting Illinoisans, and this legislation ensures more money will be available without relying on additional state funding.”

“The Illinois Lottery welcomes the police memorial instant ticket to our specialty ticket portfolio,” Illinois Lottery Interim Acting Director Harold Mays said. “Since 2006, sales of specialty tickets have raised nearly \$50 million for various good causes in Illinois. The police memorial ticket will add to that legacy.”

“No dollar amount raised could ever replace a loved one who has paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty,” said Illinois State Police Director Leo P. Schmitz. “The funds raised by this new bill will serve as a tribute to these fallen heroes for their sacrifice, and more importantly help future generations of police officers, their families and their children.”

“We are proud to support the State of Illinois' new scratch-off lottery ticket to benefit the families and preserve the memories of our real-life heroes who lost their lives protecting others,” Chicago Police Superintendent Eddie Johnson said on behalf of the Chicago Police Memorial Fund. “Nothing can replace the empty seat at the dinner table or fill the aching absence of these heroes. But we can remember their bravery, integrity and selfless service by memorializing their exceptional character through the scholarships and programs that will be assisted by this new lottery game.”

“We’re grateful to the General Assembly and Gov. Rauner for making this day possible,” said Dave Johnson, president of the Illinois Police Officers Memorial Committee. “This fund will help the children of our fallen officers and will help preserve the Illinois Police Officers Memorial as well as support the annual police officers’ ceremony, which is held the first Thursday in May.”

The funds raised through this new scratch-off ticket will be used to build and maintain police memorials and parks, hold annual memorial commemorations, give scholarships to children of officers killed or severely injured in the line of duty, provide financial assistance to police officers and their families when a police officer is killed or injured in the line of duty, and provide financial assistance to officers to purchase or replace protective gear.

The new law goes into effect Jan. 1, 2019.