

[Muncie Star Press](#)

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From my time as a kid growing up in Columbus, I have always had a sense of awe when it comes to our law enforcement personnel and their work to keep our country safe. During this National Police Week, it is appropriate to take a moment to honor those on the thin blue line.

I have seen up close what it means to serve in law enforcement as my uncle was a member of the Chicago Police Department and my former neighbor is a member of the Columbus Police Department.

The men and women in law enforcement work hard every day, sometimes performing the ultimate act of sacrifice. Last year, according to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, 152 law enforcement officers died in the line of duty and so far in 2011, 72 men and women in uniform have died.

Earlier this year, Indianapolis Metro Police Officer David Moore was tragically shot during a traffic stop on a Sunday morning in January. He passed away just a few days later. The 29-year-old officer died in the line of duty, serving his fellow Hoosiers.

Police officers are often our first line of safety and support, and on a daily basis they risk their lives to ensure our protection.

Whenever they step out of their car for a traffic stop, knock on a door to respond to a call, or stand watch over a public event, they are putting the well-being and safety of others before their own.

Our police officers are the first on the scene if there is an intruder in our home or a problem in our communities. They watch over our neighborhoods and schools, ensuring the safety of our children and teaching them the importance of not getting involved in gangs or drugs, and often serve as tremendous role models.

And perhaps at no time in our nation's history was their heroic work more evident than almost 10 years ago during the tragic events of 9/11 when police officers were among those who raced into burning buildings to try and save the victims of the attacks. To them and all their fallen colleagues, America owes a debt of gratitude that we will never be able to repay.

Law enforcement officers provide a web of support that holds together our society.

It's for their selflessness in pursuit of our safety that I salute our nation's law enforcement personnel during National Police Week. I encourage every Hoosier to take a minute this week and just say thanks to at least one of the men and women who serve us on the thin blue line.

Mike Pence represents Indiana's 6th District in the U.S. House of Representatives.