

By Mike Pence

Growing up in Columbus, I always had a sense of awe when it came to police officers and the sacrifices they make to keep us safe. That sense of awe remains, but as an adult, it has been joined by deep appreciation and gratitude for those who serve in law enforcement. As the nation celebrates 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, 73 law enforcement officers died in the line of duty and so far in 2012, 40 men and women in uniform have died.

Last year, Indianapolis Metro Police Officer David Moore was tragically shot during a traffic stop on a Sunday morning in January. He passed away a few days later. The 29-year-old officer died in the line of duty, serving his fellow Hoosiers. This past Sunday, his name was inscribed on the National Law Enforcement Memorial.

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. These men and women serve as tremendous role models.

And perhaps at no time in our nation's history was their heroic work more evident than a little more than 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.