Commonwealth of Kentucky

For immediate release

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KENTUCKY FALLEN OFFICERS HONORED AT LAW ENFORCEMENT MEMORIAL CEREMONY

Gov. Steve Beshear, Rebecca Grignon-Reker addressed attendees

RICHMOND, Ky. – As rain fell softly against the cold, etched steel of the Kentucky Law Enforcement Memorial, tears fell with it Thursday.

Just past the 10-year anniversary of her husband's line-of-duty death, widow Rebecca Grignon-Reker's voice broke as she expressed her appreciation for the memorial. She expressed her gratitude that because of it, her late husband, Louisville Metro Police Officer Peter Grignon, and the other 524 names of officers who have given their lives in service are not forgotten.

The memory and sacrifice of Kentucky's officers killed in the line of duty was honored once again at the Department of Criminal Justice Training's annual law enforcement memorial ceremony, May 21 in Richmond.

Gov. Steve Beshear recognized, despite negative national media reports, Kentucky is represented by some of the best men and women sworn to, "fairness and equality, safety and justice."

"They are a reminder to the public of the flesh and blood – the human shield – that separates society from utter lawlessness," Beshear said.

2014 marks another historic year where Kentucky suffered no sworn officer, line-of-duty deaths. However, this year's ceremony honored seven Kentucky officers killed in the line of duty between 1858 and 2013, but whose names were not added to the national memorial until recently.

As she spoke to the crowd of nearly 100 survivors, friends and family members, as well as hundreds of serving law enforcement, public safety dispatchers and other citizens, Grignon-Reker spoke of how fond her late husband was of the brotherhood of law enforcement. She struggled to maintain her composure as she recalled the night she was

told her husband had been killed.

“My worst fear when Peter fell was that he would be forgotten,” she said. “Memorials like this make sure that doesn’t happen. This brings the attention of all of Kentucky, our whole community. I think that is very, very important. Like the governor said, this isn’t a time where people are looking at you kindly. This memorial serves to remind us who each and every one of you are. I hoped Peter would be the last. But we know it’s not a matter of if, it’s a matter of when someone else will sacrifice their lives.”

The Kentucky Law Enforcement Memorial monument stands in memory of nearly every Kentucky peace officer who has been killed in the line of duty. This year’s additions bring the total number of names on the monument to 525.

One of the criteria for having a name placed on the Kentucky Law Enforcement Memorial is that it be on the National Law Enforcement Memorial. The historical names added today to Kentucky’s memorial are:

Louisville Police Department Officer George Coulter, died Aug. 17, 1858
Louisville Police Department Officer Martin Roth, died Oct. 29, 1877
Louisville Police Department Officer Joseph Boyle, died Oct. 7, 1887
Paducah Police Department Officer James E. Phelps, died Nov. 8, 1894
Estill County Sheriff’s Office Deputy Henry T. Reed, died Aug. 21, 1920
Elliott County Sheriff’s Office Deputy Joseph Carter, died Nov. 9, 1926
Louisville Police Department Officer Bob W. Branham, died May 14, 2013

The memorial foundation was established in 1999 to build the unique memorial. Once the memorial was completed in 2000, the organization expanded its efforts to include an ongoing financial endowment program, which helps Kentucky peace officers and their families with educational, medical and emergency needs.

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