

An Expert's Take on the Importance of the PBA

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When I was asked to write an article for the *Blue Review* about expert witness testimony and what the law enforcement officer gets for his/her money when employing an expert, it was easy. All I had to do was describe what I do, since I am an “expert witness.” But, as I sat down to write the article titled *The Value of an “Expert Witness” in Police Litigation* I felt it was also important to express my feelings about the benefits provided by

the Southern States PBA and how being a member of this great organization not only provides you the services that I offer as an expert witness when needed, but also provides its members with peace of mind that no other organization can offer.

In today’s tough economic times, we should all ask what we are getting for our money.

Are you getting real value for your money with your SSPBA membership? The answer to the question is simply..... **Yes, you are!**

With more than 30,000 lawsuits being filed each year against law enforcement officers, your chances of being sued are now 1 in 20. Most officers, when sued, want a lawyer that is representing *their* interest and not the interest of their employer. The cost to retain an experienced attorney and to hire an expert witness to defend a case can easily exceed \$50,000. The SSPBA will provide an attorney for you and, if needed, an expert witness like me to protect your interest if a criminal or civil action is brought against you arising out of your duties as a law enforcement officer. In many cases, expert witness testimony is necessary to present the most effective defense. PBA legal benefits include the cost of expert testimony when your attorney and the PBA legal team decide that an expert is necessary. Having served successfully as an expert witness in numerous PBA cases, I think your \$23.50 a month membership fee in the SSPBA is money well spent and a drop in the bucket when you need that lawyer and expert to defend you!

Do not overlook the other benefits that you also receive as a member of the SSPBA. Membership brings with it attorney representation when you are being subjected to unfair discipline, assistance from professional pension consultants as you try to improve your benefits, professional lobbyists to help get legislation favorable to law enforcement officers enacted, a salary replacement benefit for your family if you are killed in the line of duty and an attorney if you are forced to shoot someone. You can count on that by being a member of the SSPBA. If you are not a member already, you should be!