



The Washington Report

The Newsletter of the National Association of Police Organizations
Representing America's Finest

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NAPO WASHINGTON REPORT

NAPO Meets with COPS Office Director

NAPO's Executive Director, Bill Johnson, met with COPS Office Director, Ron Davis, at NAPO Headquarters on January 28, 2014. During the meeting, Johnson provided background on NAPO's mission and our history of collaboration with the COPS Office. Johnson also noted that since 9/11, state and local law enforcement have taken on a significant national security role. Johnson stressed the importance of hiring and retention, and explained that there is no substitute for the men and women who keep our communities safe.

Director Davis agreed with the importance of maintaining boots on the ground, and noted that the COPS Program is approaching its 20-year anniversary, which is an ideal time to acknowledge the success of the program and develop an agenda for community policing for the next 20 years. Davis emphasized the importance of having a labor perspective as the COPS Office develops an agenda for the next 20 years, and requested NAPO assist with this endeavor. Johnson welcomed the opportunity to be a part of this project.

NAPO will continue to maintain close communications with the COPS Office and looks forward to working with Director Davis to advance community policing efforts within state and local agencies. Additionally, NAPO continues to make passing the COPS Improvement and Reauthorization Act of 2013 a top legislative priority. NAPO has discussed the importance of this legislation with the bill's sponsor, Congressman Dave Reichert (R-WA), and his staff on numerous occasions, and we are committed to working with the Congressman to ensure the passage of this bill.

NAPO Briefings on Capitol Hill - National Blue Alert Act & Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program Reauthorization Act

Over the past week, NAPO has joined fellow stakeholders in meetings with staffers for **Senator Bob Corker (R-TN)** and **Senator Dean Heller (R-NV)** to request additional support for the Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) Grant Program Reauthorization Act of 2013 (S.933) and the National Blue Alert Act of 2013 (S.357). NAPO also met with a senior staffer for **Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD)**, the sponsor of the Blue Alert Act, to discuss strategies to move the bill forward.

On August 1, 2013, the Senate Judiciary Committee advanced the BVP Grant Program Reauthorization Act of 2013 to the Senate as a whole for consideration by a vote of 14 to 3. NAPO continues to work with fellow law enforcement organizations to garner additional cosponsors to support this legislation. The BVP Grant Program is a critical resource

for state and local jurisdictions that saves lives. NAPO plans to continue to engage members of Congress to ensure the passage of this vital piece of legislation, which extends the life of the BVP Grant Program through 2018.

On September 19, 2013, the Senate Judiciary Committee passed the National Blue Alert Act of 2013 by a vote of 15 to 3. This bill would create a nationwide alert system to apprehend violent criminals who have injured or killed police officers. This bill reaffirms NAPO's commitment to ensuring the safety of our law enforcement men and women and the communities they serve to protect every day.

NAPO will continue to expend all available efforts to advocate for the passage of both the BVP Grant Program Reauthorization Act and the National Blue Alert Act, and we will keep our members updated on the status of these bills.

NAPO Attends NCPERS Annual Legislative Conference

NAPO attended the National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems (NCPERS) Annual Legislative Conference on January 27, 2014. The following includes a brief summary of pertinent information presented at the conference:

- Mr. Ron Brownstein, Political Director of the Atlantic Media Company, discussed the current difficulty in Washington to move in any direction. He noted the fundamental issue we face is we have two coalitions with very different ideas of American government and they cannot find a way to bridge their differences. Brownstein believes that if there were better relationships in Washington across party lines, the tone of Washington would be more civil, but he does not think the outcomes would be very different because barriers are structural. He stated the three main issues as follows: neither party can maintain party advantage; we are living in a period where the country does not trust either party enough to grant it any kind of lasting hold on power where they can set a lasting direction; and the current structure of political system is now oriented toward divided government.
- American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Director of Collective Bargaining, Steven Kreisberg, presented on the new Illinois pension changes. Kreisberg discussed the political basis for the impairment of Illinois retirement plans as follows: historic underfunding, 1995 legislation, legislature's unwillingness to tax, the current appetite for spending and pensions as the lowest priority, and solvency issues. The Illinois Legislature has made changes to the Illinois pension systems even though Article 13, Section 1 of the Illinois Constitution guarantees pension contracts. Those changes, effective July 1, 2014, are as follows: cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) reductions, COLA freezes, pensionable salary caps, increased retirement age (impacts employees who are 45 and younger), and funding changes (decreases employee contribution by 1% of pay). The Legislature is using the decrease in employee contributions as a legal argument, along with their ability to police powers of the state. Multiple legal challenges have already been filed.
- NCPERS Executive Director, Hank Kim, presented Oregon State Treasurer, Ted Wheeler (D), the NCPERS Elected Official of the Year Award. Treasurer Wheeler accepted the award, with remarks on the causes of the Great Recession as too much leverage on Wall Street, lack of financial controls, and greed. Treasurer Wheeler discussed the lost economic security of the middle class during the Great Recession. When discussing retirement security, Treasurer Wheeler stated that retirement security is not an individual problem, it is a societal issue, and there is a societal cost at not addressing the issue.
- Anthony Roda, Principal, Williams & Jensen, provided the NCPERS Legislative Agenda for 2014. He discussed the Public Employee Pension Transparency Act (PEPTA) in detail, which was introduced by Representative Devin Nunes (R-CA) and Senator Richard Burr (R-NC) in April 2013. PEPTA would for the first time impose federal reporting requirements on the funding status of state and local pension plans. Fulfilling the reporting requirement would be the responsibility of the plan sponsor, that is, the state or municipal government.

- Like NAPO, NCPERS opposes PEPTA. PEPTA does not protect employee benefits, save costs, or result in more transparency. It is an inappropriate Federal mandate that imposes costly regulation and threatens to tax state and local government bonds. PEPTA mandates a costly and complex layer of Federal reporting on top of existing state and local accounting and reporting. PEPTA gives Federal regulators sweeping powers to impose duplicative requirements on State and local governments already struggling to comply with existing costly Federal paperwork burdens. PEPTA also threatens far-reaching and unintended consequences for the municipal bond market and the economy as a whole. Moreover, PEPTA creates a one-size-fits-all Federal mandate that interferes with State and local government recovery efforts already underway, and does not allow States and localities to adopt tailored solutions to meet their unique long-term needs. NAPO has routinely met with fellow stakeholders and Congressional staffers to discuss this issue. NAPO has also sent letters to the legislation's cosponsors to express concerns with PEPTA. NAPO will continue to express opposition to PEPTA, as NAPO strongly believes the legislation is imprudent and unnecessary.

If you have any questions about this conference, please contact Melissa Nee at: mnee@napo.org.

Sources:

2014 NCPERS Legislative Issues Book. Washington, DC: NCPERS, 2014. Print.

"Blog: NCPERS Holds the 2014 Legislative Conference." *National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems*. NCPERS, 27 Jan. 2014. Web. 31 Jan. 2014.

HSGAC Begins Marking-Up the Postal Reform Act of 2013

On January 29, 2014, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee (HSGAC) began work on a measure that would overhaul the U.S. Postal Service - the Postal Reform Act of 2013.

Leading up to the mark-up, NAPO contacted every member of the HSGAC and held numerous meetings to request the Workers' Compensation Reform Act be removed from the Postal Reform Act. NAPO stressed that postal reform legislation is not the appropriate vehicle for this text. Senator Tester's (D-MT) staff strongly supported NAPO's concerns, which was evidenced during the mark-up when he offered an amendment that would strike the language that would change federal workers' compensation benefits. Unfortunately, the amendment was rejected 6-7, but the close vote indicates that the HSGAC is willing to consider an alternative amendment when the Senators reconvene on February 6, 2014.

NAPO plans to discuss alternative options further with Senator Tester's staff, and will provide our members with status updates as the legislation moves forward.

Source:

Tully-McManus, Katherine. "Postal Service Overhaul Debate Begins." *Congressional Quarterly*. CQ, 29 Jan. 2014. Web. 31 Jan. 2014.

NAPO Participates in Conference Call with Vice President and Secretary of Labor

On January 29, 2014, NAPO was afforded the opportunity to participate in a teleconference led by Vice President Joe Biden and Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez. The teleconference focused President Obama's commitment to raise the minimum wage, which was highlighted during his State of the Union Address. Both Vice President Biden and Secretary Perez stressed that raising the minimum wage is important for all Americans.

NAPO was grateful to be invited to participate in the conference call, and we will continue to keep our members updated on the Administration's proposals.