



The Washington Report

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

August 25, 2014

NAPO WASHINGTON REPORT

NAPO Runs Open Letter to the People of Ferguson, Missouri and Police Officer Darren Wilson in St. Louis Post Dispatch

On August 24, 2014, NAPO ran an open letter to Officer Darren Wilson and the citizens of Ferguson, Missouri in the St. Louis Post Dispatch. The text of the letter is below and an image of the ad is attached to the end of this report.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PEOPLE OF FERGUSON, MISSOURI AND TO POLICE OFFICER DARREN WILSON

Ahead of everything else, we mourn the loss of human life. Our entire professional careers, and our personal beliefs, are founded on the conviction that life matters. "To serve and protect" isn't only a motto, it's an aspiration and a reflection of the intrinsic value of every human being, regardless of age, color, sex, status, religion, orientation or appearance. We recognize and grieve over the fact that a life is cut short in this case, and nothing will ever change the awful reality of that human tragedy for everyone involved.

At the same time, and just as importantly to us and, we hope, to all people of good will, we have a deep and profound concern for Police Officer Darren Wilson. Officer Wilson, most of us will never have the chance to meet you or your family in person, but if we could, we would want you to know that hundreds of thousands of your brother and sister officers, and millions of citizens across our nation, remember you. We care about you, your coworkers, your family and loved ones. We don't pretend to know all the facts in this case, no one does. But we do know that every person involved in this case is entitled to due process, and that includes you.

On behalf of the more than 240,000 officers from every walk of life whom we represent, and the millions of citizens we serve, we pray for peace on our streets, we strive for justice, and we remember the individual men and women called to serve and protect. And we remember you, Officer Wilson.

Respectfully, the men and women of the National Association of Police Organizations

If you have any questions about NAPO's position, please contact Bill Johnson at: bjohnson@napo.org.

NAPO Meetings on Capitol Hill

Over the past week, NAPO has met with senior staffers for the following members of Congress: **Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky (D-IL)**, **Congressman John Shimkus (R-IL)**, and **Congressman Daniel Lipinski (D-IL)**. NAPO used the meetings to outline our top legislative priorities, which include the following initiatives:

Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) Grant Act: The BVP Grant Program provides Federal funds to state and local law enforcement departments to assist state and local law enforcement efforts to purchase bullet resistant vests. NAPO continues to expend all available efforts to garner additional cosponsors for the House and Senate versions of this bill.

Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Improvement and Reauthorization Act: This bill would reauthorize the COPS Program for five years and raise the current hiring cap from \$75,000 to \$125,000. The COPS Office has been extremely successful in implementing and carrying out its designated objectives. Since its creation, the COPS Office has assisted over 13,000 of the nation's 18,000 jurisdictions with over \$14 billion in funding to hire more than 125,000 additional officers. Reauthorizing this program will allow for the continuation of a highly successful program that keeps our communities safe.

Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act (JMHCA): The Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act (MIOTCRA) created the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program (JMHCP) to help states and counties design and implement collaborative efforts between criminal justice and mental health systems. The JMHCA reauthorizes the successful MIOTCRA and extends the JMHCP for five years. The JMHCP can help law enforcement agencies across the United States in their responsibilities in assisting citizens with mental health issues.

Social Security Fairness Act: This bill would strike the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) formulas currently used to calculate Social Security benefits. Both formulas were enacted in the 1980s because Congress was concerned Social Security paid unintended benefits to workers who had spent most of their careers in "non-covered" jobs. However, the formulas go too far and penalize workers with split careers who contributed a great deal to Social Security, but retire under their "non-covered" pensions. By significantly scaling back and reducing Social Security benefits for law enforcement officers and their survivors, as GPO and WEP do, officers and their families are provided much less protection against financial difficulties.

NAPO appreciated the opportunity to meet with each of the staffers, and looks forward to continuing to work with them in the future. If you have any questions about any of the issues summarized above, please contact Melissa Nee at: mnee@napo.org.

NAPO Meeting with Congressman Reichert's Law Enforcement Staffer

On August 21, 2014, NAPO met with **Congressman Dave Reichert's (R-WA)** new law enforcement staffer to discuss our top priorities. NAPO has always held a strong relationship with Congressman Reichert and his staff, and the Congressman has a long history of supporting NAPO's top priorities as the Co-Chair of the House Law Enforcement Caucus.

The staffer was very receptive to NAPO's priorities. We look forward to continuing to work with the Congressman and his staff to pass the COPS Improvement and Reauthorization Act; ensure the highest possible funding levels for the

COPS Hiring Program; and pursue the passage of key pieces of legislation to protect law enforcement officers and the communities they serve.

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

NAPO's Legislative Positions Update

NAPO's updated "Legislative Positions" document can be viewed at the following site: http://www.napo.org/files/8814/0898/4234/Legislative_Positions_Update_-_August_20_2014_-_Final.pdf. The table denotes all status updates in yellow. Also, the updated "Sponsor/Cosponsor" list for the major pieces of legislation NAPO is currently working on in the House and the Senate is available at the following site: <http://www.napo.org/washington-report/sponsor-cosponsor-spreadsheet/>.

If you have any questions about any of the bills NAPO is working, please contact Melissa Nee at: mnee@napo.org.

Please monitor NAPO's website www.napo.org, and Facebook page: National Association of Police Organizations, and follow us on Twitter @NAPOpolice for breaking news and updates.