



The Washington Report

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Representing America's Finest

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NAPO WASHINGTON REPORT

NAPO's Legislative Activity – September Recap

NAPO continues to work diligently to ensure that our top legislative priorities stay at the forefront of the Congressional agenda. The following includes a brief summary of NAPO's significant accomplishments over the past month. Also, attached to this report, please find an updated Legislative Positions document.

Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act: NAPO has contacted every member of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, & Pensions (HELP) and the House Committee on Education & the Workforce to request that the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act (PSEECA) be reintroduced during the 113th Congress. This important piece of legislation would extend collective bargaining rights to public safety officers.

To supplement meetings with staffers for the House Committee on Education and the Workforce's Chairman (**George Miller (D-CA)**) and Ranking Member (**John Kline (R-MN)**), NAPO has concentrated its efforts on meeting with every member of the Committee to advocate for reintroducing this legislation. Over the past month, NAPO has discussed this legislation with staffers for the following members of Congress: **Congresswoman Marcia Fudge (D-OH)**, **Congressman David Loebsack (D-IA)**, **Congressman Tom Price (R-GA)**, **Congressman Brett Guthrie (R-KY)**, **Congressman Joe Heck (R-NV)**, **Congressman Trey Gowdy (R-SC)**, **Congressman Richard Hudson (R-NC)**, **Congressman Larry Bucshon (R-IN)**, **Congressman Robert Andrews (D-NJ)**, **Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR)**, **Congressman Bobby Scott (D-VA)**, **Congresswoman Susan Brooks (R-IN)**, **Congressman Tim Bishop (D-NY)**, **Congressman Rush Holt (D-NJ)**, and **Congressman Jared Polis (D-CO)**. The staffers NAPO has met with thus far have been receptive to NAPO's proposals. Once the bill is reintroduced, NAPO expects strong support from the Democratic members of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce.

NAPO plans to continue efforts to advocate for this important legislation to the remaining members of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, as well as members of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, & Pensions to ensure the bill is reintroduced during this Congress. On Thursday, October 3, 2013, NAPO is scheduled to discuss this legislation with staffers who work for the following members of the Senate HELP Committee: **Chairman Tom Harkin (D-IA)**, **Senator Tim Scott (R-SC)**, **Senator Kay Hagan (D-NC)**, **Senator Patty Murray (D-WA)**, **Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK)**, **Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY)**, and **Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA)**.

Driver's Privacy Protection Act: NAPO has continued to aggressively lobby for modifications to the recent amendment to the Driver's Privacy Protection Act (DPPA), which has negatively impacted the law enforcement community. In September, NAPO proposed modifications to this amendment, which will protect law enforcement officers from large fines and even the loss of their licenses for *de minimus* actions.

NAPO has concentrated efforts on the Florida delegation, as we have been working closely with the Palm Beach County Police Benevolent Association on this issue. In September, NAPO discussed this issue with staffers for the following members of Congress: **Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL)**, **Congressman Dennis Ross (R-FL)**, **Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL)**, **Congressman Patrick Murphy (D-FL)**, **Congressman Daniel Webster (R-FL)**, **Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL)**, **Congressman Richard Nugent (R-FL)**, **Congressman Bill Posey (R-FL)**, **Congressman Bill Young (R-FL)**, and **Congressman Ted Deutch (D-FL)**. Each of the staffers was receptive to NAPO's proposals and sympathetic to concerns voiced by the law enforcement community. NAPO plans to follow-up with the staffers in the coming weeks to gain traction on our proposals.

National Blue Alert Act of 2013: **NAPO's advocacy efforts led to the National Blue Alert Act of 2013 being passed by the Senate Judiciary Committee with strong bipartisan support.** (When the Senate Judiciary Committee held a mark-up on the bill, Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-VT) mentioned NAPO as a strong supporter of the legislation). This bill would create a nationwide alert system to apprehend violent criminals who have injured or killed police officers.

Over the past two months, NAPO has met with senior staffers for every Republican member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, maintained close communication with the bill's sponsor's staff, Senator Cardin, and written letters of support for the legislation. NAPO will continue to aggressively lobby for the passage of this legislation as it is considered by the full Senate. 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.

Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act: NAPO continues to be a key participant in the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act (JMHCA) Working Group, which is used to discuss ways forward to pass this important legislation. Additionally, NAPO joined fellow stakeholders in a meeting with a senior staff member for Senator Saxby Chambliss (R-GA) to request the Senator co-sponsor the legislation.

NAPO has also contacted senior staff members for key Republican Senators (**Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK)**, **Senator Johnny Isakson (R-GA)**, **Senator John McCain (R-AZ)**, **Senator Deb Fischer (R-NE)**, **Senator Jeffrey Chiesa (R-NJ)**, **Senator John Boozman (R-AR)**, **Senator Bob Corker (R-TN)**, **Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN)**, **Senator Mark Kirk (R-IL)**, **Senator John Thune (R-SD)**, **Senator John Barrasso (R-WY)**, and **Senator Tim Scott (R-SC)**), to request they co-sponsor the legislation.

This important piece of legislation will support efforts to help criminal justice and mental health agencies work collaboratively towards better outcomes. NAPO will continue to support all efforts necessary to ensure the passage of this bill, which will assist law enforcement agencies across the United States in their responsibilities in assisting those, and dealing with citizens with mental health issues.

Postal Reform Legislation: NAPO has worked with other stakeholders on efforts to remove the Workers' Compensation Reform Act from the Senate's current version of Postal Reform legislation. NAPO has also contacted the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman (**Tom Carper (D-DE)**) and Ranking Member (**Tom Coburn (R-OK)**) to request the Workers' Compensation Reform Act be removed from Postal Reform legislation.

NAPO is concerned that the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Reform Act would cut benefits for federal workers injured on the job once they reach retirement age. Additionally, this text would negatively impact state and local law enforcement officers that are covered by federal workers' compensation benefits. NAPO will continue to engage staffers to stress that Postal Reform legislation is not the appropriate vehicle for the Workers' Compensation Reform Act.

NAPO has also contacted every member of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee to request the Committee consider language modifications to Title 18, United States Code, Section 3061 that will

positively impact NAPO's member group, the Postal Police Officers Association (PPOA). NAPO has maintained close contact with staffers for the Committee's leadership, **Chairman Tom Carper (D-DE)** and **Ranking Member Tom Coburn (R-OK)**, and has continued to engage with Committee staffers as Postal Reform legislation is considered by the Senate. On September 30, 2013, NAPO accompanied the PPOA to meetings with the following members of the Committee to request NAPO's proposals be considered as Postal Reform moves forward: **Senator Kelly Ayotte (R-NH)**, **Senator Mark Pryor (D-AR)**, **Senator Jon Tester (D-MT)**, **Senator Claire McCaskill (D-MO)**, and **Senator Rand Paul (R-KY)**. NAPO will continue to advocate for modifications to Title 18, United States Code, Section 3061 as the Senate moves forward with Postal Reform.

Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2013: NAPO has formally endorsed the Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2013. The Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2013 improves and ensures public confidence in the criminal justice system. This legislation reauthorizes the bipartisan Justice for All Act of 2004, which increased resources devoted to DNA and other forensic technology, established safeguards to prevent wrongful convictions, and enhanced protections for crime victims. The Justice for All Act of 2013 reauthorizes and improves the programs created by this historic bill.

NAPO's Executive Director Attends Vice President's Reception to Mark the Anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act: On September 12, 2013, NAPO's Executive Director attended a reception at Vice President Biden's home to commemorate the 19th anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which was first signed into law in 1994. Johnson joined approximately 140 guests at the reception, including senior Administration officials, members of Congress, and private sector partners, as well as leaders of the major national women's, domestic violence, Tribes, and sexual assault advocacy organizations.

NAPO was honored to be a part of the event, and will continue to support Vice President Biden's efforts to bring awareness to violence against women, and hold perpetrators accountable.

Executive Director Meets with Attorney General Holder: On September 9, 2013, NAPO's Executive Director represented NAPO in a meeting with Attorney General Eric Holder in Mr. Holder's office in the Department of Justice (DOJ). Besides NAPO, only the national office of the FOP was there to represent any rank and file interests. The other participants were all chiefs, sheriffs, district attorneys or their representatives (IACP, MCC, MCS, NSA, NDAA, etc.). Also present were Tony West, the Associate Attorney General, James Cole, the Deputy Attorney General, and Michelle Leonhart, Administrator of the DEA. The subject of the meeting was the Attorney General's recent announcement of a change in U.S. DOJ policy concerning the prosecution of marijuana cases in states which have legalized or decriminalized marijuana possession/use, such as Colorado and Washington State. Some advocates had objected that the DOJ was in effect refusing to enforce valid federal law in those states. Possession/use of marijuana in those states is still illegal under federal law. Others argued that the DOJ position would only encourage additional states to legalize marijuana in some form.

Mr. Holder emphasized that in his view, nothing had fundamentally changed in the way the DOJ would handle these cases. Rather, he explained that in view of federal sequestration and the financial constraints DOJ has to operate under, they have taken a hard look at which cases receive priority. In this view, minor possession cases and small amount cases will be left to state or local authorities to prosecute. Major cases which involve violence, firearms, threats of violence, or harm to children will continue to receive high priority from the DOJ and will continue to be aggressively prosecuted by the Department. As part of this overall strategy, Mr. Holder indicated the DOJ will be monitoring the results of the DOJ policy going forward, and also suggested that meetings such as this should be convened every quarter going forward.

NAPO will continue to lobby members of Congress to advocate for our legislative priorities. We will provide our members with regular status updates on developing issues. (NAPO's Legislative Priorities booklet is available at: http://www.napo.org/legislative-update/LegislativePriorities2013_2015.pdf).

If you have any questions about NAPO's legislative activities, 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 at NAPOpolice for breaking news and updates.