

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

Representing America's Finest

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EXECUTIVE OFFICERS November 17, 2020

MICHAEL McHALE
President
Florida Police Benevolent
Association

Dr. Cheryl Champ
Chair
Pelham Union Free School District
18 Franklin Place
Pelham, New York 10803

JOHN A. FLYNN
Vice President
Police Benevolent
Association of New York City

Dear Dr. Champ:

TODD HARRISON
Recording Secretary
Combined Law Enforcement
Associations of Texas

On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), representing over 241,000 sworn law enforcement officers across the country, I write to you in regards to the Pelham Union Free School District's decision to ban the wearing of any graphic or logo that honors the profession of policing or memorializes those officers who made the ultimate sacrifice and were killed in the line of duty.

SCOTT HOVSEPIAN
Treasurer
Massachusetts Coalition
of Police

MARC KOVAR
Sergeant-at-Arms
New Jersey State Policemen's
Benevolent Association

The specific sweatshirt that was the catalyst to this ban was a commemorative sweatshirt made by the family of New York City Transit Detective George Caccavale, who was shot in the line of duty on July 26, 1976. The Caccavale family created this sweatshirt in honor of the beloved father and grandfather who was taken from them all too soon and donated the proceeds of the sale of the sweatshirt to support the spouses and children of slain officers. Yet, for some reason, the school board, at your direction, decided that these sweatshirts – a memorial to a lost loved one – were “threatening” and banned their wear by staff and students simply because they honored law enforcement and have the “thin blue line” police flag on them.

CRAIG D. LALLY
Executive Secretary
Los Angeles Police
Protective League

With this act, the Pelham Union Free School District is fanning the flames against law enforcement. The men and women who serve as law enforcement officers risk their lives every day to ensure our schools, neighborhoods and communities are safe. Children of police officers in your schools are impacted by the stresses of their parent's job and the vitriol directed at their parents for the jobs they do. The School District, administrators, and teachers should be supporting them and not ostracizing them with such prohibitions.

MARK YOUNG
Vice President,
Associate Members
Detroit Police Lieutenants &
Sergeants Association

JAMES PALMER
Parliamentarian
Wisconsin Professional Police
Association

NAPO calls on you and the school board to stop its divisive anti-law enforcement rhetoric. It is not only insulting to law enforcement and the families of fallen officers that you would construe such memorials and imagery as threatening, but it is incredibly inconsiderate to the children of police officers who attend the schools in the Pelham Union Free School District. We urge you to reverse this ban and allow the children, families and friends of law enforcement to show their support of those who serve our communities.

Sincerely,

William J. Johnson
Executive Director

Cc: Pelham Union Free School Board