



The Washington Report

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

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NAPO WASHINGTON REPORT

U.S. Senate Confirms Jeh Johnson as Next Secretary of Homeland Security

The U.S. Senate confirmed Jeh Johnson as the next Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) by a vote of 78-16 on December 16, 2013.

Mr. Johnson is one of the most highly qualified and respected national security leaders. Mr. Johnson served nearly seven years in senior leadership roles at the Department of Defense (DoD) during two Administrations. During his tenure at DoD, Mr. Johnson was known for his sound judgment and counsel.

Mr. Johnson was a critical member of President Obama's counterterrorism team. By advising the President and two Secretaries of Defense, Mr. Johnson was at the center of the development of some of the most sensitive and important national security policies and strategies during President Obama's first term.

Mr. Johnson has been a dedicated career public servant, and has continually evidenced his integrity and strong judgment. Throughout his career, Mr. Johnson has demonstrated that he is exceptionally qualified to handle the full range of challenges faced by DHS.

NAPO has supported Mr. Johnson since he was nominated for the position and we look forward to working with him as he takes on his new role as Secretary of DHS.

NAPO Briefings on Capitol Hill - Driver's Privacy Protection Act & Officer Sean Collier Campus Police Recognition Act

NAPO met with staffers for **Congressman Jim Jordan (R-OH)** and **Congresswoman Karen Bass (D-CA)** to discuss our proposal to modify the recent amendment to the Driver's Privacy Protection Act (DPPA) and request support for the Officer Sean Collier Campus Police Recognition Act. (Congressman Jordan and Congresswoman Bass are members of the House Judiciary Committee).

The DPPA requires state motor vehicle departments to receive permission from individuals before their personal motor vehicle record may be sold or released. The DPPA amendment authorizes a private right of action for knowing violations, and a court may award damages in the amount of \$2,500 for each time a record was accessed, as well as attorney fees and other litigation costs. Law enforcement officers are subject to these stringent punishments, even if they did not review files with criminal intent.

NAPO briefed the staffers on our proposed language modifications to the DPPA amendment, which include adding a clause that explains that penalties will be applied only if persons access information with the specific intent to secure an economic benefit. Also, NAPO proposes removing the \$2,500 penalty for a violation of this act, as well as adding a statement that explains there must be repeated disregard of this law for action to be taken. If the language is not modified, law enforcement officers will be subject to large fines, and even the loss of their licenses for *de minimus* actions.

NAPO also discussed the Officer Sean Collier Campus Police Recognition Act, (sponsored by Congressman Michael Capuano (D-MA)), with the staffers. This legislation would amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 by adding campus police officers to the Department of Justice's Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program. This bill would define a "campus police officer" as a police officer who is authorized to enforce the criminal laws and is employed by an institution of higher education. The change would be retroactive to April 15, 2013 - the date of the Boston bombings. NAPO has worked closely with Congressman Capuano and his staff on efforts to add cosponsors to this legislation, currently supported by the entire Massachusetts delegation, and plans to continue these efforts to ensure the passage of this important bill.

NAPO will continue to aggressively lobby members of Congress to gain support for our proposed language changes to the DPPA amendment, as well as garner additional cosponsors to support the Officer Sean Collier Campus Police Recognition Act. We will keep our members updated on the status of these initiatives.

If you have examples of law enforcement departments that have been negatively impacted by the most recent DPPA amendment, please contact Melissa Nee at: mnee@napo.org.

NAPO Attends Senate Finance Committee Hearing on Retirement and Social Security Issues

On December 18, 2013, NAPO attended a Social Security Pensions and Family Policy Subcommittee (Senate Finance Committee) hearing on "The Role of Social Security, Defined Benefits, and Private Retirement Accounts in the Face of the Retirement Crisis." The following individuals provided testimony: Robert G. Romasco, President, AARP; Andrew G. Biggs, Resident Scholar, American Enterprise Institute; Dean Baker, Co-Director, Center for Economic and Policy Research; and John F. Sweeney, Executive Vice President, Fidelity Investments.

Chairman Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Ranking Member Patrick Toomey (R-OH) focused the hearing on the role of retirement security in America. Committee members and witnesses offered ideas on how to approach Social Security reform and focused discussion on an examination of obstacles facing many Americans as they plan for retirement.

NAPO supports a long-term solution to fixing the basic problems of Social Security, so long as such a solution does not mandate that all or some state and local government employees, including newly hired ones and their employing agencies, be required to pay Social Security taxes. NAPO plans to continue to serve as the key representative of law enforcement in defending this issue before Members of Congress.

NAPO Attends National Criminal Justice Association Brown Bag

NAPO participated in a National Criminal Justice Association Brown Bag on December 16, 2013. Senator Landrieu's staff spoke to the group about the Youth Prison Reduction through Opportunities, Mentoring, Intervention, Support, and Education (PROMISE) Act. Also, staffers for **Senator Cornyn (R-TX)** and **Congressman Ted Poe (R-TX)** briefed the group on their anti-trafficking bill, which NAPO has endorsed.

The Youth PROMISE Act will implement and fund evidence-based practices related to juvenile justice and criminal gang activity. It will work to interrupt the cradle to prison pipeline by supporting proven prevention and intervention strategies. The legislation will both encourage and require leadership and oversight of these programs through community-based committees. **NAPO continues to review the bill as it takes shape, and will keep our members updated on the status of the legislation.**

NAPO pledged its support for the End Sex Trafficking Act in July 2013. Every year, thousands of criminals prey on children and trafficking victims in the United States—purchasing illicit and coerced sexual acts on websites and on our streets. In order to help drive the pimps and purveyors of sex trafficking out of business forever, this legislation targets the predators that purchase trafficking victims for sex. The End Sex Trafficking Act strengthens the Trafficking Victims Protection Act by adding the words “solicits or patronizes” to the sex trafficking statute— making absolutely clear for judges, juries, prosecutors, and law enforcement officials that criminals who purchase sexual acts from trafficking victims can and should be arrested, prosecuted, and convicted as sex trafficking offenders.

The End Sex Trafficking Act also leverages existing resources by directing federally funded law enforcement task forces that are part of the Innocence Lost National Initiative to focus on fighting demand through the investigation, arrest, and prosecution of persons who purchase sexual acts with human trafficking victims. **NAPO will continue to assist with efforts to ensure this important legislation is passed and provide our members with regular status updates.**

Sources:

"The Legislation." *Youth PROMISE Action*. Web. 19 Dec. 2013.

United States. Cong. *End Sex Trafficking Act One-Pager*. 113th Cong. Cong. Doc. Print.

Silver Alert Bill Introduced

On December 17, 2013, **Senators Joe Manchin (D-WV), Jay Rockefeller (D-WV), Chris Coons (D-DE), Chuck Schumer (D-NY), Claire McCaskill (D-MO), and Amy Klobuchar** introduced legislation to create a nationwide network for locating missing adults and seniors. The National Silver Alert Act would create a federal program modeled after the AMBER Alert and provide federal coordination and assistance to local and state law enforcement agencies. **The following excerpt from Senator Manchin’s press release includes a reference to NAPO as a supporter of the bill:**

“The Silver Alert was put in place in West Virginia when I was Governor and has proven to be a positive and effective program since it started in 2009,” Senator Manchin said. “In West Virginia, we’ve been fortunate enough to need the system activated only a handful of times, and we have been very successful in returning those missing individuals home safely. As a proud member on the Special Committee on Aging, I encourage my colleagues to remember that America’s priorities should be based on our values, and keeping our promises to our seniors should be one of our highest priorities. Our seniors helped build and defend this nation, and we have an obligation to them that we must never break.”

“Every day, the families of those suffering with dementia live with the fear that their loved one will go out and forget the way home,” Senator Coons said. “Seniors and adults with medical conditions are especially susceptible to illness, injury, or death if they are not found within 24 hours. Since 2008, Delaware’s Gold Alert program has coordinated state and local efforts to quickly locate missing seniors and persons with disabilities. This bill will ensure law enforcement officials across the nation have the resources they need to bring lost loved ones home safely.”

“When a person with Alzheimer’s or dementia wanders from his or her home, it is frightening for that individual and their family and friends,” said Senator Schumer. “Statistics show that with timely notification, the chances of finding a

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missing person are greatly increased. This bill will provide federal coordination and assistance in setting up Silver Alert systems to make sure that we are working with our local, state and federal law enforcement to ensure the protection and care of our senior citizens.”

“A rapid response system like Silver Alert will save lives,” said Senator McCaskill, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Consumer Protection. “Alerting the public and coordinating search efforts for missing adults and seniors, especially those with disabilities, can only help ensure our families’ safety. This program has proven itself to be extremely effective all across the country; implementing it at a federal level is just common sense.”

“As Alzheimer’s and dementia continue to affect too many Minnesotans, many seniors are at a high risk of ending up lost and in a dangerous situation,” Senator Klobuchar said. “This legislation, which is similar to a program already in place in Minnesota, will help law enforcement across the country spread the word anytime a senior has gone missing and help improve the chances that tragedy is averted.”

This legislation is supported by the Alzheimer’s Association, Alzheimer’s Foundation of America, Elder Justice Coalition, **National Association of Police Organizations**, and the National Sheriffs’ Association.

Source:

"Joe Manchin, United States Senator, West Virginia." *Manchin, Rockefeller, Coons, Schumer, McCaskill, Klobuchar Introduce Silver Alert Bill to Help Locate Missing Seniors*. N.p., 17 Dec. 2013. Web. 19 Dec. 2013.

Excellence in Mental Health Act

On December 12, 2013, the Senate Finance Committee approved the bipartisan Excellence in Mental Health Act, authored by **Senators Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)** and **Roy Blunt (R-MO)**, to expand access to community mental health services and strengthen the quality of care provided. The bill was included as an amendment to the so-called "doc fix" (SGR) bill that permanently reforms the way doctors are reimbursed by Medicare. The version of the Excellence in Mental Health Act voted for in committee would establish pilot programs in ten states to strengthen and improve access to care.

The Excellence in Mental Health Act establishes criteria for certified community behavioral health clinics to ensure providers cover a broad range of mental health services - including 24-hour crisis care, increased integration of physical, mental, and substance abuse treatment so they are treated simultaneously rather than separately, and expanded support for families of people living with mental health issues.

NAPO signed-on to a letter of support for the Excellence in Mental Health Act in May 2013, and has maintained close contact with Senator Stabenow and her staff to ensure the bill is passed. This legislation is critical to expanding access to community behavioral health centers and improving the quality of mental health and substance use treatment for all Americans.

Below please find a news release issued by Senator Blunt’s office, detailing the importance of the Excellence in Mental Health Act and noting NAPO’s support of the bill.

Senators Blunt, Stabenow Join Glenn Close To Urge Congress To Pass Excellence In Mental Health Act - Bipartisan Bill Backed By Mental Health Advocates, Veterans, Law Enforcement Groups

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Actress Glenn Close joined U.S. Senators Roy Blunt (Mo.) and Debbie Stabenow (Mich.) for a press conference today to urge Congress to pass the bipartisan “Excellence in Mental Health Act,” which was approved by the U.S. Senate Finance Committee last week.

Close is the founder of Bring Change 2 Mind, which works to end the stigma and discrimination against those living with mental illness. The Senators were also joined by mental health advocates, veterans, and law enforcement officials who support the bill.

“Approximately one in four adults suffers from a diagnosable mental disorder each year nationwide, according to the National Institute of Mental Health,” said Blunt. “We’ve got a model that works to solve these important problems, and passing this bipartisan provision out of committee is an important step forward. Now is the time for Congress to act.”

“Mental health issues touch every family in some way. Our bipartisan bill expands access and improves quality of care so people can get the treatment they need and live healthy, successful lives,” said Stabenow. “We had a major victory last week, we’ve got tremendous momentum, and we’re going to keep working hard until this bill gets done.”

“It is critical that people come out and talk about mental illness to reduce the stigma surrounding those living with mental illness,” **said Close**. “This legislation is so important in the effort to expand access to mental health services and improve the quality of treatment available. With reduced stigma and discrimination, and increased access to quality care, people living with mental illness can get the treatment they need.”

Additional Background Information:

- Last Thursday, a version of the “Excellence in Mental Health Act,” authored by Blunt and Stabenow, passed in the U.S. Senate Finance Committee as an amendment to the so-called ‘doc-fix’ legislation (the SGR bill). The amendment will set up demonstration programs across the country to improve mental health care quality and expand access to mental health treatment.
- In February 2013, Blunt and Stabenow introduced the Excellence in Mental Health Act to help fix the fragmented mental health system by offering current Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs) a chance to obtain the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic designation.
- The bill establishes criteria for certified community behavioral health clinics to ensure the providers cover a broad range of mental health services – including 24-hour crisis care, increased integration of physical, mental and substance abuse treatment so they are treated simultaneously rather than separately, and expanded support for families of people living with mental health issues. Certified clinics providing this care could then get reimbursed from the government the same way that traditional health centers can.
- In addition to Blunt and Stabenow, the Excellence in Mental Health Act is co-sponsored by a bipartisan group of Senators including U.S. Senators Mark Begich (Alaska), Richard Blumenthal (Conn.), Barbara Boxer (Calif.), Sherrod Brown (Ohio), Maria Cantwell (Wash.), Susan Collins (Maine), Chris Coons (Del.), Amy Klobuchar (Minn.), Patrick Leahy (Vt.), Ed Markey (Mass.), Robert Menendez (N.J.), Barbara Mikulski (Md.), Lisa Murkowski (Alaska), Chris Murphy (Conn.), Bill Nelson (Fla.), Jack Reed (R.I.), Jay Rockefeller (W.Va.), Marco Rubio (Fla.), Chuck Schumer (N.Y.), Jon Tester (Mont.), Elizabeth Warren (Mass.), and Ron Wyden (Ore.).
- The Excellence in Mental Health Act is supported by more than 50 mental health organizations, veterans organizations and law enforcement organizations including: the **National Association of Police Organizations**, National Sheriffs’ Association, American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychological Association, National Alliance on Mental Illness, the National Council for Behavioral Healthcare, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Mental Health America, National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America and Give An Hour, among many others.

Source:

"Roy Blunt, United States Senator for Missouri." Senator Roy Blunt, 18 Dec. 2013. Web. 19 Dec. 2013.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

YOUR NOMINATIONS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE FOR TOP COPS®

This year will mark the 21st year NAPO has produced the TOP COPS Awards®. The ceremony will take place on Monday, May 12, 2014, again coinciding with Police Week. Over the next few months I will be asking for your assistance in three major areas in which you, our members, can help to ensure the success of TOP COPS®: nominations, sponsorships, and show attendance. Today, I want to ask for your assistance with the first and most fundamental component, nominations.

TOP COPS® is unique in that it is a peer nominated award. However, one of the greatest struggles we have faced in the past is getting the nomination form out to officers nationwide. I am asking you to assist us in making this happen. **It is our goal this year to see all 50 states represented with a nominee.** While we appreciate and welcome nominations from the executive level, we would really like to see the nomination form circulated among *your* members.

The nomination form can be downloaded from the NAPO website, www.napo.org, and if need be, we would also be happy to email you the form. Just send us an email to info@napo.org with your request. Please feel free to duplicate and post it anywhere you feel it is appropriate. We would especially like to see forms posted in association offices and departments with the hope that your members will feel inclined to nominate the great cases/officers they have come into contact with over the past year. I would also like to ask you to consider including the nomination form, on your website, or as a hand out at your next meeting.

If you have other thoughts or ideas as to how to get the word out about this most worthwhile event, please let us know. With your help and partnership, I know that TOP COPS® will be a tremendous success!

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.