



# The Washington Report

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

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June 16, 2014

## NAPO WASHINGTON REPORT

### **NAPO Victory!**

## **Senate Judiciary Committee Passes Victims of Child Abuse Act Reauthorization Act**

The Senate Judiciary Committee passed the Victims of Child Abuse Act (VOCAA) Reauthorization Act of 2013 by voice vote on June 12, 2014.

This bill reauthorizes the VOCAA, which provides funding for Children's Advocacy Centers that serve child victims of violent crimes and help law enforcement hold perpetrators accountable. The VOCAA Reauthorization Act of 2013 increases authorization levels for Children's Advocacy Centers for the first time since the VOCAA was enacted in 1990. The reauthorization also strengthens the programs through enhanced accountability provisions, non-profit requirements, and limitations on conference expenditures.

NAPO pledged our support for the VOCAA Reauthorization Act in November 2013, and the bill's sponsor, **Senator Chris Coons (D-DE)**, has recognized NAPO as a supporter of the legislation. NAPO's efforts led to additional Senators signing on to the bill as cosponsors before the Senate Judiciary Committee mark-up. We look forward to continuing to work with Senator Coons and his staff as the bill moves to the full Senate for consideration.

If you have any questions about this legislation, please contact Melissa Nee at: [mnee@napo.org](mailto:mnee@napo.org).

### **NAPO Victory!**

## **Texas Parole Board Denies Release of Thelette Brandon**

Thanks to your efforts, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice has denied the parole of Thelette Brandon, who was convicted of killing Waco Police Sgt. Roger Earl Barrett.

Sgt. Barrett's widow, Shirley Barrett, expressed appreciation for NAPO's support in the attached letter. (NAPO's letter of opposition to Brandon's parole is also attached to this report). Sgt. Barrett dedicated his life to serving the community. Your efforts ensured that this cop-killer will remain behind bars and the community will remain safe.

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We are most grateful for your continued support. If you have any questions about this case, please contact Bill Johnson at: [bjohnson@napo.org](mailto:bjohnson@napo.org)

## NAPO Supports the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act

NAPO continues to expend all available efforts to pass the Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) Grant Act of 2013 (H.R. 988). After reengaging with staffers for the House bill's sponsor, **Congressman Frank LoBiondo (R-NJ)**, NAPO sent a letter of support for the bill, which can be viewed at the following site: [http://www.napo.org/files/8814/0266/9354/NAPO\\_Supports\\_BVP\\_Grant\\_Program\\_Act\\_of\\_2013\\_FOR\\_WEBSITE.pdf](http://www.napo.org/files/8814/0266/9354/NAPO_Supports_BVP_Grant_Program_Act_of_2013_FOR_WEBSITE.pdf).

The BVP Grant Act of 2013 reauthorizes the highly successful BVP Grant Program for another four years, and ensures that all of America's law enforcement officers are provided with the life-saving protection they need.

The BVP Grant Program is a critical resource for state and local jurisdictions. To date, this vital program has enabled over 13,000 state and local law enforcement agencies to purchase over one million vests. However, while many officers are protected by bullet-resistant armor, an alarming number of officers, many in small departments across the United States, are not afforded this same protection due to local budget constraints. NAPO strongly believes the advancement of this legislation is essential to assist state and local law enforcement efforts to purchase bullet resistant vests for their officers.

**NAPO will continue to aggressively pursue the passage of this legislation in both the House and Senate to ensure that law enforcement officers have the necessary safety equipment. We hope you will consider writing a letter to your Senators and Representative to request their support on this important legislation.**

If you have any questions about this legislation, please contact Bill Johnson at: [bjohnson@napo.org](mailto:bjohnson@napo.org)

## NAPO Attends National Criminal Justice Association Brown Bag

NAPO attended the monthly National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA) Brown Bag on June 9, 2014. A senior staffer for **Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ)** attended this month's meeting. The staffer highlighted Senator Booker's commitment to supporting the law enforcement community. Senator Booker is a cosponsor of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program and Reauthorization Act, as well as the following pieces of legislation:

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

**Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Improvement and Reauthorization Act:** Among other points, this legislation 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.

NAPO looks forward to working with Senator Booker on the aforementioned pieces of legislation, as well as our other top priorities. We will continue to keep our members updated on the progress of these initiatives.

If you have any questions about the bills highlighted above, please contact Melissa Nee at: [mnee@napo.org](mailto:mnee@napo.org).

## NAPO Attends CSG Event on Capitol Hill

On June 12, 2014, NAPO attended the following event hosted by the Council of State Governments (CSG): *Increasing Public Safety, Reducing Recidivism, and Cutting Corrections Spending*. Speakers, including **Governor Earl Ray Tomblin (D-WV)**, **Governor Tom Corbett (R-PA)**, **Senator Rob Portman (R-OH)**, **Senator John Cornyn (R-TX)**, **Congressman Hank Johnson (D-GA)**, **Congressman Chaka Fattah (D-PA)**, and **Director Denise O'Donnell (Bureau of Justice Assistance at the U.S. Department of Justice)**, discussed groundbreaking efforts to slow the growth of corrections spending and reinvest in strategies that increase public safety.

Many of the speakers highlighted the successful Second Chance Act. NAPO is a supporter of the Second Chance Reauthorization Act of 2013, which improves state and local grant programs to promote successful prisoner reentry and improve public safety. This legislation continues targeted funding for reentry programs at the state and local level that have been proven to reduce recidivism, lead to better outcomes for those released from prison, and save prison costs. The bill holds strong bipartisan support in both the House and Senate, and NAPO looks forward to continuing to work with fellow stakeholders to pass this important legislation.

If you have any questions about the Second Chance Reauthorization Act, please contact Melissa Nee at: [mnee@napo.org](mailto:mnee@napo.org).

## NAPO Meeting on Capitol Hill – Congressman Heck

On June 12, 2014, NAPO met with **Congressman Joe Heck's (R-NV)** staff to discuss a bill to establish a National EMS Memorial (H.R. 4690). This bill seeks to authorize the National EMS Memorial Foundation to undertake the effort of designing, siting, and creating a memorial in Washington, D.C., to honor the service and sacrifices of our nation's emergency medical service providers.

NAPO also took the opportunity to highlight our top priorities. In addition to expressing appreciation for the Congressman's support of the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act and discussing our efforts to pass the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act and COPS Improvement and Reauthorization Act, NAPO provided background on the following bills:

**Officer Sean Collier Campus Police Recognition Act:** MIT Police Officer Collier lost his life while protecting both the campus and the greater Boston community. This legislation will honor Officer Collier by ensuring that campus police officers are added to the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Program. Campus police officers serve their communities with integrity and valor, and deserve to be included among those public safety personnel whose survivors are eligible to receive benefits under the PSOB Program.

**Social Security Fairness Act:** This bill strikes the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) formulas currently used to calculate Social Security benefits. Both 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.

The Congressman’s staff was very receptive to the above proposals. NAPO looks forward to continuing to work with Congressman Heck and his staff to advance our top priorities, and will keep our members updated on the status of these initiatives.

If you have any questions about any of the legislation outlined above, please contact Melissa Nee at: [mnee@napo.org](mailto:mnee@napo.org).

**Please monitor NAPO’s website [www.napo.org](http://www.napo.org), and Facebook page: National Association of Police Organizations, and follow us on Twitter at NAPOpolice for breaking news and updates.**

**Shirley Barrett**

June 3 2014

National Assoc of Police Org  
317 South Patrick St  
Alexandria, VA 22314

RE: Parole Denial for Thelette Brandon, TDCJ-ID #339778

Dear Sir:

A short time ago I contacted you to help me petition the Texas Parole Board to deny the release of Thelette Brandon to parole for the murders of my police officer husband and a Kansas man. I have received word that the Parole Board has reviewed and denied the release of Thelette Brandon to parole. His next review date has been set approximately May 1, 2017

I am sincerely grateful for your efforts in helping me to affect the decision for the safety of our community.

Sincerely,

*Shirley Barrett*  
Shirley Barrett



## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

*Representing America's Finest*

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### NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

WILLIAM J. JOHNSON  
Executive Director

January 23, 2014

Texas Department of Criminal Justice  
Victim Services Division  
8712 Shoal Creek Blvd, Suite 265  
Austin, TX 78757-6899

**RE: Parole Denial for Thelette Brandon, TDCJ #339778**

Dear Members of the Parole Board:

On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), I am writing to express our strongest possible opposition to the parole of Thelette Brandon, who murdered Waco Police Sgt. Roger Barrett on June 12, 1976.

NAPO is a coalition of police unions and associations from across the United States that represents more than 1,000 police units and associations, 241,000 sworn law enforcement officers, and more than 100,000 citizens who share a common dedication to fair and effective crime control and law enforcement.

We vehemently oppose the parole of Thelette Brandon, who brutally murdered Sgt. Barrett. Sgt. Barrett was killed while apprehending murder suspect Brandon, and died of multiple stab wounds in the chest and back. Brandon also shot Sgt. Barrett once in the lower right arm and once in the back and engaged in a shoot-out with other police officers before his capture. Brandon had stabbed to death 21-year old Frank Johnson, Jr. of Cherryville, Kansas minutes earlier.

Sgt. Barrett dedicated his life to serving the community. The horror of the murder of Sgt. Barrett would be compounded by the release of Thelette Brandon.

Brandon has clearly demonstrated he has no respect for the criminal justice system or the law enforcement officers who protect the public. We urge your support and action to ensure that this killer remains in prison. If NAPO can provide any additional information as you make your decision, please feel free to contact me at: (703) 549-0775.

Sincerely,

William J. Johnson  
Executive Director