



The Washington Report

The Newsletter of the National Association of Police Organizations

Representing America's Finest

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NAPO WASHINGTON REPORT FLASH

NAPO LEADERSHIP INVITED TO WHITE HOUSE WITH PRESIDENT OBAMA TWICE IN TWO WEEKS. NEW DIRECTOR OF COPS OFFICE

In each of the last two weeks, NAPO leadership has been invited to the White House to meet with President Obama and other national leaders on issues of national scope. Last week, on March 19, NAPO President Tom Nee and Executive Director Bill Johnson were invited by Vice President Biden to attend the annual gathering of national labor leaders for an "Irish Celebration" that was supposed to call to mind St. Patrick's Day, but was really held on St. Joseph's Day. As it worked out, Nee and Johnson were able to attend the event with President and First Lady Michelle Obama, and the Prime Minister of Ireland, Enda Kenny, and his wife, Fionnuala O'Kelly. Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Patrick Leahy of Vermont, and various other representatives and senators were present. It was an excellent opportunity for Nee and Johnson to advance NAPO's views on police labor and justice issues in a less formal setting with some of the top federal leaders in the country.

On a far more serious note, NAPO also attended, at the President's invitation, a press event today, Thursday March 28, focusing on the President's views on gun violence and legislative initiatives designed to address this issue. Using a backdrop of mothers who have lost children to firearms violence, the President along with Vice President Biden called on Congress to assure a swift opportunity for a vote on pending legislation.

Finally, the U.S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services office (the "COPS" office) has a new director. After three and a half years, Director Bernard Melekian is stepping down and returning to California. Director Melekian has been a good friend of NAPO, speaking at our officer suicide prevention seminar in Washington last May, and inviting NAPO leadership from around the country to a summit meeting to discuss future COPS office issues. Barney Melekian is being replaced by current Principal Deputy Director Joshua Ederheimer. Ederheimer called on NAPO Executive Director Johnson this week to let him know that he, Ederheimer was taking over the COPS office and that he and the office looked forward to continuing the excellent relationship that NAPO and COPS have enjoyed over the years. Ederheimer also thanked Johnson and NAPO for their consistent efforts over the last several Congresses to keep the COPS office alive when it was threatened to be zeroed out in successive budgets. Johnson thanked Ederheimer for the courtesy call, and pledged NAPO's continued support of the program. Johnson and Ederheimer have known each other for years, having served together for years on the National Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial Fund Board of Directors.

THERE REALLY IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR THIS LEVEL OF ACCESS IN WASHINGTON, PLEASE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT NAPO AS IT WORKS TO SUPPORT AMERICA'S LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY!

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