



The Washington Report

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

June 14, 2024

Don't Wait! Register Now for NAPO's Annual Convention

July 14 – 17, 2024 ~ Nashville, TN
JW Marriott Hotel

Register now and join us for [NAPO's 46th Annual Convention](#)! Participate in setting NAPO's legislative priorities for the 119th Congress and issuing NAPO's endorsements for the Offices of President and Vice President of the United States of America. Learn from presentations by prominent law enforcement figures about the latest developments in police policies and services and help determine NAPO's path forward.

The 46th Annual Convention will be held at the JW Marriott Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee. The JW Marriott, located in the heart of downtown Nashville, is easy walking distance to the city's most famous attractions and landmarks including: The Ryman Auditorium – home to the original Grand ole Opry – the Country Music Hall of Fame & Museum, 2nd Avenue Historic District, The Gulch, Lower Broadway, and the Famous “Honkey-Tonk Highway”.

When not exploring Nashville, the hotel offers several bars & restaurants including The Bourbon Sky Restaurant & Lounge, offering stunning views of Nashville's skyline. The hotel also offers a workout center and beautiful rooftop pool with Cabana Bar.

For more information and to register, please visit www.napo.org/convention24.

NAPO Leadership Meets with Domestic Policy Council Director

NAPO President Mick McHale, Executive Director Bill Johnson, and Governmental Affairs Director Andy Edmiston met with the Director of the White House Domestic Policy Council (DPC), Neera Tanden, and DPC staff on June 5. Director Tanden took over for the previous director, Ambassador Susan Rice. The meeting was to touch base and discuss NAPO's current priorities and how we can work together. The DPC is charged with the advancement and implementation of the President's domestic policy agenda in the White House and across the federal government, including the implementation of President Biden's executive order on police reform.

President McHale touched on several of NAPO's priorities including federal protections for officers, investment in law enforcement as a profession to combat the recruitment and retention crisis departments across the country are facing, and federal support for officer mental health and wellness. On federal protections for officers, Executive Director Johnson walked through NAPO's support of utilizing existing

federal criminal processes to prosecute (1) the assault and murder of federally funded state and local law enforcement officers, such as those officers whose agencies or jurisdictions receive aid from the U.S. Departments of Justice (DOJ) or Homeland Security (DHS); and (2) the assault and murder of state and local officers engaged in the protection of federally recognized civil rights, such as those officers attacked while safeguarding protests. McHale pressed Director Tanden on the creation of a specialized unit within the Department of Justice to address prosecutions of individuals who violently attack or kill state and local law enforcement officers.

McHale also raised the importance of federal support and funding for educational benefits for officers, not only as a retention tool, but also to help recruit officers from within our communities who may not meet the education standards of a department. He also called out the Administration for only requesting \$10 million for the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act and the Supporting and Treating Officers in Crisis Act Programs under the DOJ's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) in its Fiscal 2025 budget proposal. These important programs help law enforcement agencies establish or enhance mental health care services for their officers by making grants available to initiate peer mentoring pilot programs. The law enforcement community needs much more than \$10 million for these programs to adequately address officers' mental health needs. A significant funding increase is necessary for the establishment of confidential peer mentoring programs in cities and states across the country.

NAPO appreciated the opportunity to discuss our top priorities with Director Tanden and DPC staff and the open and productive discussion that followed. Having a seat at the table to ensure our members' voices are heard is vital to the work NAPO does at the federal level, no matter what the Administration.

NAPO Endorses Bill to Provide Education Benefits to Officers

NAPO pledged its support for the Educational and Career Opportunities for Public Safety (EdCOPS) Act (S. 4450), introduced by Senators Mark Kelly (D-AZ) and Josh Hawley (R-MO). This bill creates the Public Safety Officer Education Assistance Program under the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs. This new program largely mirrors that of the Public Safety Officer's Benefits (PSOB) Education Assistance Program, which provides tuition assistance for up to 45 months of full or part time education or training. The current PSOB education benefit is \$1,488 per month.

To qualify for the Public Safety Officer Education Assistance Program under this legislation, a public safety officer must have served their department for at least eight years and must commit to serving their department for four additional years.

Law Enforcement agencies across the country serving urban, rural, big, and small communities are struggling to retain qualified officers. Education benefits have proven not only to increase officer loyalty towards their department but also improve officer performance and allow for greater promotion within the department. Under the EdCOPS Act, officers can choose to use the education assistance for themselves or for their children, creating opportunities that benefit their families. This bill will be an important tool for departments to retain experienced officers and we thank Senators Kelly and Hawley for their support of the law enforcement community.

House Approves Amendment Restoring Access to 1033 Program

The House voted to include a NAPO-backed amendment in its version of the Fiscal 2025 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), H.R. 8070, from Representative Michael Waltz (R-FL), which would restore

state and local law enforcement's unfettered access to surplus military equipment through the Department of Defense's 1033 Program. The amendment was approved by a bipartisan vote of 238 – 187, with 24 Democrats supporting it – the most bipartisan this issue has been in years.

President Biden's 2022 police reform Executive Order reinstated the restrictions that were put in place by President Obama's 2015 Executive Order on what equipment state and local law enforcement could acquire through the 1033 Program and how that equipment must be used. Those restrictions were immediately reestablished and expanded for the 1033 Program as well as for Department of Homeland Security and Justice Department grants, effectively eliminating state and local law enforcement's access to needed surplus federal equipment.

Programs like the 1033 Program have been vital resources in allowing state and local law enforcement to acquire items used in search and rescue operations, disaster response, and active shooter situations that they otherwise would not be able to afford. This equipment has not led to the "militarization" of police, but rather has proven to be essential not only in protecting communities against violent criminals, but also in responding to natural disasters, which are unfortunately increasing in frequency.

As we have mentioned numerous times to the Administration, the legitimate and well-demonstrated needs of officers are being overlooked due to the optics of law enforcement agencies obtaining this equipment from the federal government. NAPO thanks Congressman Waltz for his continued support and for his efforts to include this important amendment in the House-passed NDAA. We will fight to ensure it passes as part of the final FY 25 NDAA.

NAPO Participates in Meeting with Assistant AG for OJP

On June 10, NAPO participated in a meeting with Assistant Attorney General (AAG) Amy Solomon of the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Department of Justice (DOJ), and leadership of the various components of OJP, including Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Director Karhlton Moore. The meeting was with a coalition of organizations across the criminal justice system to highlight and discuss the work OJP is doing, particularly around its grant programs. OJP just released its [OJP Grant Awards](#) website, which includes resources like:

- An interactive and searchable [map of OJP's awards since FY21](#);
- [Grantee Stories](#) that highlight the impactful work of OJP's grantees; and
- A [Grantee Communications Toolkit](#) with templates and resources to help departments and organizations tell and amplify their stories.

The meeting also allowed organizations to ask questions of AAG Solomon and advise staff of the needs of the criminal justice stakeholder community. NAPO focused its questions on the impact of the President's Executive Order on police reform on grantees and grant awards and requested data on whether applicants have been impacted by the EO in their ability to secure grants through BJA. NAPO also took the opportunity to express our incredible frustration with the lack of accountability and transparency within the Public Safety Officer's Benefits (PSOB) Program, which falls under OJP. There are too many PSOB disability claims that have been sitting in the Office for *years* without any explanation as to why or status updates to the officers or their families.

NAPO always appreciates participating in these meetings and the collaborative work we do with the DOJ. We will continue the conversation with OJP around the implementation of the police reform executive order.

Social Security Fairness Act Update

The June 7th Senate Finance Subcommittee on Social Security, Pensions and Family Policy field hearing in Columbus, Ohio was a success and highlighted the adverse effect the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) have on the retirement security of public servants. NAPO member organization, the Ohio Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (OPBA), testified at the hearing. Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH), chairman of the Subcommittee and the sponsor of the Social Security Fairness Act (S. 597), chaired the hearing, which is the first action the Senate has taken on this important bill in recent history.

The Social Security Fairness Act, S. 597, currently has 59 cosponsors – just one cosponsor away from making the bill filibuster-proof. We are working to make this hearing a jumping off point in the Senate for movement on this important bill.

Thank you to all our members who have submitted a statement to the Senate Finance Committee and to those who continue to organize letter drives through the submission deadline of June 21. Please continue to send in statements to Statementsfortherecord@finance.senate.gov and copy NAPO's Director of Governmental Affairs, Andy Edmiston, at aedmiston@napo.org. Your words help us drive the point home that the GPO and WEP are detrimental to the retirement security of millions of public sector retirees.

The House version of the bill, H.R. 82, currently has 322 bipartisan cosponsors and support for the bill continues to grow. This is the year for Congress to finally do what is right and enact the Social Security Fairness Act.

Please see our "[Sponsor/Cosponsor](#)" [spreadsheet](#) to check if your Representative or Senator is a cosponsor. Contact NAPO's Director of Governmental Affairs, Andy Edmiston, at aedmiston@napo.org or 703-549-0775 for more information on the Social Security Fairness Act and materials you can share with your Representative if they are not yet a cosponsor.

You can watch the full hearing (opening and witness statements) here:

<https://youtu.be/DwH43gmuJqo?feature=shared>

House Committee Approves DETECT Fentanyl & Xylazine Act

The House Homeland Security Committee approved the Detection Equipment and Technology Evaluation to Counter the Threat of (DETECT) Fentanyl and Xylazine Act (H.R. 8663) on June 12. This bill, introduced by Congressman Nick LaLota, would authorize the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to conduct research and development, testing, and evaluation on equipment that would help law enforcement better detect fentanyl and other drugs.

The DETECT Fentanyl and Xylazine Act would create a new statutory responsibility for DHS's Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) to carry out research and development (R&D) to improve the safety, effectiveness, and efficiency of drug detection equipment and reference libraries used by federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies to identify unknown substances.

Fentanyl, particularly illicitly manufactured fentanyl, xylazine and other synthetic drugs are having deadly consequences on communities across the country, both big and small. Because illicit fentanyl is so powerful — just a few salt-sized grains can kill an adult — small amounts go a long way for drug traffickers. These relatively small and potent amounts mean fentanyl is difficult and hazardous to detect, making it easy to traffic and a danger to those trying to interdict it. The DETECT Fentanyl and Xylazine Act would give law

enforcement the tools necessary to safely detect and crack down on the trafficking of fentanyl and related opioids.

NAPO is calling on the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee to take up the Senate version of the bill, S. 4419, and is working with the Senate bill sponsors, Senators John Cornyn (R-TX), Jon Ossoff (D-GA), James Lankford (R-OK), and Kyrsten Sinema (I-AZ), to move the DETECT Fentanyl and Xylazine Act through the Senate.

Please Help Sponsor an Event at the NAPO Convention

NAPO's 46th Annual Convention at the JW Marriott in Nashville, Tennessee is quickly approaching. We are busy planning what is sure to be a fantastic convention. Information regarding the convention is available at www.napo.org/convention24

We would like to ask member organizations to please consider contributing \$500 - \$1000 towards the cost of the convention. We know this is a lot to consider, but the registration fees do not cover all the convention costs, and this way we can do our best to keep the registration fees reasonable.

If your organization would like to assist in sponsoring an event, please return the form and payment to NAPO no later than June 26, 2024.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact NAPO's Director of Events, Elizabeth Loranger at eloranger@napo.org or (703) 549-0775.

Thank you in advance for helping to make NAPO's 46th Annual Convention a success!

Sincerely,



Mick McHale, President



Bill Johnson, Executive Director

COPS Office Releases Report on Officers Shot in the Line of Duty in 2023

To better understand the nature and frequency of incidents that could give rise to the issuance of a Blue Alert, the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office within the Department of Justice monitors and tracks the shootings of law enforcement officers in the United States - specifically, shootings of on-duty officers resulting in an officer being wounded or killed. These types of attacks account for nearly all situations where a Blue Alert would most likely be utilized. (Assaults by means other than firearms are not tracked due to data on such crimes not being consistently available.)

The COPS Office just their 2023 year-end report, [Law Enforcement Officers Shot in the Line of Duty: 2023 Year-End Summary](#). According to the report, in 2023 there was a 14 percent increase in the number of

officers shot and killed compared to 2022. Among the notable statistics within the report, these facts stick out when considering officer safety:

- There were **308** incidents during calendar year 2023 resulting in **378 law** enforcement officers being shot in the line of duty – including **52** incidents where multiple officers were shot.
- **44** law enforcement officers died from their injuries.
- **138** law enforcement officers were shot in **115** separate ambushes.
- At least **45** officers are known to have been saved by their bulletproof vests.

This report serves to highlight the dangerous profession law enforcement officers have and the risks they face when serving and protecting their communities. The data is invaluable as we work to convince Congress that it must pass increased protections for our nation’s law enforcement officers who are facing a serious and growing trend of armed attacks against them. NAPO strongly believes that establishing stricter penalties for those who harm or target for harm law enforcement officers will deter violent crimes and add another layer of safety for the nation’s law enforcement officers, who put their lives on the line each day to protect our communities.

The National Blue Alert Network – the impetus for this report – was established by the Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu National Blue Alert Act. This legislation was named after New York City Police Department Officers and NAPO members Ramos and Liu, who were assassinated while serving their communities. NAPO is proud to serve on the Advisory Group that helps to implement the Act and ensures the creation of a robust and effective National Blue Alert Network.

NAPO’s Legislative Positions & Sponsor/Cosponsor Updates

NAPO’s updated “Sponsor/Cosponsor” spreadsheet is available on [NAPO’s website](#). The spreadsheet accompanies the latest “[Legislative Positions](#)” document, which is also available on the NAPO website. NAPO’s Legislative Positions is a document that highlights all the legislation that we have taken an official position on or are monitoring during the 118th Congress. It is continually updated to reflect the work we are doing on Capitol Hill.

The “Sponsor/Cosponsor” spreadsheet is a useful tool to check if your members of Congress have supported pieces of legislation that will impact our members. NAPO updates this spreadsheet regularly and continues to ensure our voice is heard on Capitol Hill.

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.