



The Washington Report

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

October 16, 2017

TIME IS RUNNING OUT! Join NAPO for Our Annual Fall Seminar: *Navigating the New Union Environment and the new Supreme Court case to make all states "right to work"*

**November 5 – 7, 2017 ~ Loews Chicago O'Hare Hotel
Rosemont, Illinois**

Learn from experts in the field how to effectively advocate for officer safety, respond to Supreme Court legal threats to union dues, how to preserve & grow membership in the changing labor environment, and legislative updates and Trump Administration changes.

REGISTER & MAKE HOTEL RESERVATIONS BY OCTOBER 20!

[Click here to Register Online](#)

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

NAPO Victory! Law Enforcement Mental Health & Wellness Act Approved by House Judiciary Committee

On October 12th, NAPO and rank-and-file officers across the country gained another win when the House Judiciary Committee approved the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act (S. 867 / H.R. 2228), sponsored by Congresswoman Susan Brooks (R-IN) and Senators Joe Donnelly (D-IN) and Todd Young (R-IN). NAPO worked closely with Senator Donnelly on introducing this important legislation, which will help law enforcement agencies establish or enhance mental health care services for their officers. The legislation will make grants available to initiate peer mentoring pilot programs, develop resources for mental health providers based on the specific mental health challenges faced by law enforcement, and support law enforcement officers by studying the effectiveness of crisis hotlines and annual mental health checks.

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According to the National Study of Police Suicides, officers are 2.5 times more likely to die from suicides than from homicides. State and local law enforcement officers are our nation's first responders. They respond to our country's greatest tragedies as well as violent crimes that unfortunately occur more frequently in our communities. They have seen and experienced horrors that they cannot forget, yet they still put their lives on the line every day to protect and serve our communities. It is time that we as a nation recognize the stress and strain of the job and give officers the resources they need to address their emotional and mental wellbeing.

NAPO proudly supports this bill and sees its approval by the House Judiciary Committee as an important victory in the fight to ensure officers across the country have access to the best mental health services available and feel supported in using those services.

We had to fight off last minute amendments to ensure that the bill was identical to the version that passed the Senate, which is vital to our efforts to quickly pass it in the House and have it signed into law. NAPO sent a [letter](#) to all Committee members, urging them to support the bill without amendments, and worked closely with Committee staff and Chairman Robert Goodlatte (R-VA), who wholeheartedly supported our efforts. The Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act was approved unanimously without amendment by the Committee and we are now focusing our efforts on House leadership to get swift action on the bill.

NAPO thanks Congresswoman Brooks, Senators Donnelly and Young for their support of the law enforcement community and their leadership on this important issue. If you have any questions about this bill, please contact Andy Edmiston at aedmiston@napo.org.

NAPO on the Hill: Asset Forfeiture and Criminal Justice Reform

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman, Senator Charles Grassley (R-IA), has reintroduced the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act, which NAPO opposes. We are not alone in our opposition – every major law enforcement organization is opposed to the bill. Not only were law enforcement representatives not consulted on the bill language before it was introduced, our concerns have continued to go ignored. NAPO is working collectively with the other law enforcement organizations to fight this legislation as well as significant asset forfeiture and criminal justice reform that does not reflect the needs of the law enforcement communities.

Chairman Grassley's staff has made clear that the Senator wants to use the Committee's time to focus on criminal justice reform and asset forfeiture reform. NAPO opposed the Chairman's asset forfeiture reform legislation – the Detering Undue Enforcement by Protecting Rights of Citizens from Excessive Searches and Seizures (DUE PROCESS) Act – last Congress because we felt that the changes it would make to the program's structure and processes would negatively affect law enforcement's ability to disrupt criminal activity. Many of the concerns the bill was looking to address were fixed in the changes the Attorney General announced on July 18, which expand state and local agencies' ability to participate in the Department's civil asset forfeiture program and put in place additional protections to ensure this important tool is not misused. [NAPO endorsed these changes in a letter to the Attorney General](#) and we continue to actively support a robust civil asset forfeiture program within the DOJ.

NAPO also opposed the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act last Congress because we felt it tried to do too much at once, and consequently, would negatively impact public safety. We are open to working with the Chairman and the Committee on both bills, assuming they take our concerns seriously and work with us to address them. This includes ensuring state and local law enforcement can continue to participate in a strong asset forfeiture program and that states and localities do not become the dumping ground for federal criminals due to sentencing and correctional reforms without the necessary safeguards and boost in support and resources in place.

NAPO looks forward to working with the Committee on these issues and will ensure that the voice of rank-and-file is heard. In the meantime, we continue to push for the Committee to take up and move our priority legislation to make certain state and local law enforcement can continue to effectively serve and protect our nation's communities. If you have any questions, please contact Andy Edmiston at aedmiston@napo.org.

NAPO on the Hill: Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights

NAPO met with staff of Senate Law Enforcement Caucus Co-Chair **Senator Chris Coons (D-DE)** and **Congressman Erik Paulsen (R-MN)** to discuss the reintroduction of the Law Enforcement Officers' Procedural Bill of Rights Act. Congressman Paulsen was sponsor of this legislation when it was last introduced in the 111th Congress in 2009 and Senator Coons not only chairs the Law Enforcement Caucus, but also holds the seat once held by then-Senator Joe Biden who championed this bill for NAPO. These meetings were part of a continuing conversation about the reintroduction of this important bill.

This bill would establish standards to guide law enforcement agencies in developing and operating a fair and effective investigative process. Individuals should have the right to file a complaint, to have the complaint investigated, and to be informed of its final disposition, including learning the outcome of the investigation and any resulting disciplinary action.

Many of NAPO's members are facing attacks to their due process rights from activists who believe that the due process rights given to officers either through their collective bargaining agreements or their state's law enforcement officers' bill of rights creates a double standard and gives officers undue protections against criminal investigations. With the President and the Attorney General declaring that supporting state and local law enforcement is a top priority for the Administration, anti-cop activists are taking to the state and local level to wage a war against officer rights.

Throughout the country, many states lack coherent guidelines and procedures for law enforcement officers' due process rights. Sworn law enforcement officers are held to an extremely high standard of personal and professional conduct, due to the enormous responsibilities they exercise. However, many officers are denied the same basic due process rights that all other citizens enjoy. In approximately fifty percent of the states, officers enjoy some legal protections against false accusations and abusive conduct. Nevertheless, this leaves hundreds of thousands of officers with limited or no due process or who face limitations or retaliation when exercising these rights.

Taking away an officers' due process rights is not the way to improve police accountability and transparency. In fact, most officer bill of rights laws and provisions include guidelines and procedures for handling and investigating complaints, ensuring the department takes complaints against officers seriously and conducts a thorough inquiry. The Law Enforcement Officers' Procedural Bill of Rights Act would ensure that all states have at least a minimum of standards and procedures in place to guide both state and local law enforcement agencies and law enforcement officers during internal investigations, administrative hearings, and evaluation of citizen complaints.

Senator Coons' staff views the bill as the workplace protections act that it is and is considering taking this on as more of a labor issue than a law enforcement issue. While concerns were shared that the current environment in Congress may not be the best to get this accomplished, the Senator's staff was generally supportive. Congressman Paulsen's staff was also largely supportive, but had not yet taken a deeper dive into the legislation and discussed it with the Congressman. NAPO will continue the conversation with both offices regarding the need for this legislation.

NAPO is looking for a member of Congress to take up the mantle and fight for officer due process rights. NAPO will meet with members of Congress until we find the person who will stand up for rank and file officers on this important issue.

If you have any questions about this legislation or NAPO's efforts to create a national Law Enforcement Officer Bill of Rights, please contact Andy Edmiston at aedmiston@napo.org.

NAPO in the News

On October 12, NAPO Executive Director Bill Johnson was quoted in a *Washington Times* article entitled, "Black Lives Matter, police-focused NFL protests overlook rising black-on-black homicides". The article discusses the NFL protests against police brutality during the national anthem and how they are missing the fact that violent crime and homicides are the real threat to black men in America. The article uses data analyzed by Heather MacDonald, who spoke at NAPO's 2016 Annual Convention, including that the number of black homicide victims has increased by almost 900 per year since the Black Lives Matter movement began in 2014.

"The latest crime figures support what rank-and-file officers are witnessing in terms of street violence, said Bill Johnson, executive director of the National Association of Police Organizations, which represents 241,000 cops.

"It jibes with what our members are telling us,' said Mr. Johnson. 'Violence in general is up in the sense that whether it leads to reported crime or arrests. Just the situation in our communities and our streets is worse than it was three years ago, certainly before the agitation from Black Lives Matter.'"

The full article is available at: <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/oct/12/nfl-protests-overlook-black-homicide-rise/>

NAPO will continue to ensure our members' voices are heard loud and clear on the Hill, with the Administration, and in the media. If you have any questions about the publication cited above, please contact Bill Johnson at: bjohnson@napo.org.

PLEASE HELP OUR BROTHER AND SISTER OFFICERS AFFECTED BY HURRICANES HARVEY & IRMA

*Thank you to all our member groups, individual members, supporters and sponsors
who have already donated to NAPO's Relief Fund!*

The requests for relief checks are flowing in. Many, many officers in Texas and South Florida have lost everything due to Hurricanes Harvey and Irma. Attached please find a [donation form](#) that you can fill in and submit. Several of our groups have reposted it to their own members and we ask that other groups please do the same. The form is also up on our Facebook site and webpage (www.napo.org) and we have a direct donations link for our Relief Fund up and running on our website.

Here is the link to make donations: <http://www.napo.org/about/how-support-law-enforcement/napo-relief-fund-hurricane-harvey-assistance/>

We will repeat our requests for contributions to our Relief Fund as long as needed.

100 percent of donations will be used to provide direct financial relief to the officers affected. We will rely on the local unions and associations to confirm the damage and losses and will immediately cut checks to the officers.

Thank you for your support and generosity for all our brother and sister officers and their families affected by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma.



Michael "Mick" McHale, President



Bill Johnson, Executive Director

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.