



The Washington Report

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

July 16, 2012

HOUSE INTRODUCES BYRNE JAG REAUTHORIZATION

At the end of Fiscal Year 2012 the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program (Byrne JAG) will expire. Congress needs to reauthorize this program. Congressman Tom Marino (R-PA) introduced the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program Reauthorization Act of 2012 (H.R. 6062) on June 29, 2012. This legislation currently has the support of eight members and was recently marked up in the House Judiciary Committee with favorable remarks by several members.

H.R. 6062 authorizes funding from FY13 through FY17 for a maximum of \$800 million per year. This is a decrease from the last reauthorization of \$1.095 billion per year. This decrease is due to the fact that the bill is more likely to pass with a lower reauthorization. The House majority maintains that bills should have an authorization level that matches current appropriations. In many cases appropriations are much lower than programs that are authorized. Additionally, the program is rarely funded at the billion dollar level. In the past few years it has been around the \$350 million mark. The highest in the past few years came in FY06, for \$634 million. There are many funding programs that have not been reauthorized and still received funding allocations.

State and local law enforcement benefit greatly from the Byrne JAG, as it is the only comprehensive federal crime-fighting program. About two-thirds of the money allocated goes to local law enforcement. The Byrne JAG program allows for a true system-wide approach that enables communities to target resources to their most pressing local needs. It funds state and local law enforcement, including multi-jurisdictional drug and gang task forces, information sharing and technology, county jails, prosecutors, drug courts, juvenile delinquency and drug treatment programs. In fact, it is the only source of federal funding for multi-jurisdictional task forces and prosecutors.

NAPO is working to encourage swift passage of the bill in the House and then the Senate. It is possible the legislation could be passed by unanimous consent in the Senate; if there are no objections. NAPO will continue to provide timely updates on this and other pertinent legislation.

NAPO VICTORY: HOUSE PASSES PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS' BENEFITS ACT OF 2012

On June 28, 2012, the United States House of Representatives passed the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Improvements Act of 2012, (H.R. 4018) by voice vote. NAPO supports this legislation as well as the Senate companion bill (S. 1696) sponsored by Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT).

This legislation improves the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) program to expedite the process of claims for benefits and to ensure that the eligible beneficiaries of public safety officers do not experience unnecessary delays in obtaining what is due to them.

The PSOB Act was designed to offer peace of mind to the men and women of the public safety community and to make a strong statement about the value Americans place on the contributions of those who serve their communities in dangerous circumstances. Public safety officers who have become disabled or who have lost their lives in the line of duty have families who must rely on the benefits promised to them by PSOB.

NAPO supports the PSOB Improvements Act because it protects these important benefits, expedites claims and helps the program with educational and outreach programs within the first responder community.

There is one issue of special note. In 2010, the Attorney General announced new mandatory wear requirements for the Bulletproof Vest Partnership program. An officer's compliance with body wear policies is subject to too many unforeseeable circumstances to justify making the payment of death benefits contingent on compliance with a blanket policy.

Consequently, NAPO advocates that language within the PSOB Improvements Act should reflect the potential impact of a mandatory wear policy. Officers who are harmed in the line of duty should not be penalized by this policy when their PSOB benefits are considered.

NAPO is working with staff in both chambers to lobby for the addition of language that reflects the new mandatory wear policy in the PSOB Improvements legislation. However, not all members of Congress are supportive of this program. Senator Tom Coburn (D-OK) has issued two letters objecting to the PSOB program, "Instead of expanding a program that is not the responsibility of the federal government, we should be working to terminate it." Based on these and similar remarks, passage of the PSOB program by unanimous consent is unlikely. Rather, with scheduled work days dwindling in the Senate, the program will need to be attached to legislation that is already *moving* (scheduled for floor time).

The families of public safety officers who have fallen or have become disabled in the line of duty rely on the benefits promised to them by the PSOB. NAPO is working to advance the PSOB Improvements Act of 2012. If you have any questions please contact NAPO's Director of Government Affairs, Rachel Hedge.

FEDERAL FLIGHT DECK OFFICERS PROGRAM RECEIVES INCREASED FUNDING

Imagine flying on a plane without anyone on board to protect you in an emergency situation. By passing the Arming Pilots Against Terrorism Act in 2002, Congress provided pilots who are United States citizens and who fly passenger aircraft, private charter flights or cargo carriers the opportunity to apply for the Federal Flight Deck Officers (FFDO) program.

The FFDO program, which is voluntary, allows pilots to receive weeklong training and follow-up on weapons handling. Once a pilot passes this program, he or she is deputized as a Federal Flight Deck Officer. The exact number of pilots who take advantage of this program is classified.

The Federal Flight Deck Officers Association is a member of NAPO. Together, we all have a vested interest in protecting passenger safety.

Currently there is a backlog of over 700 pilots waiting to complete their training. Although there is a strong demand for the FFDO program, earlier this year the Administration proposed to cut the budget in half.

On June 6, 2012, the House of Representatives unanimously agreed to the amendment offered by Representative Chip Cravaack which would increase funding for the Federal Flight Deck Officer program by \$10 million to \$35.5 million.

According to the Federal Flight Deck Officer Association, the calculated cost is \$15 per flight for armed pilots, compared with more than \$3,300 for Federal Air Marshals. This is a cost effective program that serves as a last line of defense for airline passengers.

Helping to protect our nation through the enforcement of homeland security is a priority for NAPO. NAPO is committed to promoting the legislative agenda of the Federal Flight Deck Officers Association and will continue to work to increase their ability to protect the airways.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING UPDATE

The Department of Homeland Security announced finalized funding levels for grant programs that are of importance to NAPO's membership. The FY12 totals are the same as projected earlier this year. This year, DHS needed to make adjustments and prioritize certain grants over others due to the reduction of roughly \$1 billion. Recipients of grants are directed to use money for sustaining capabilities. Investments in new capabilities are only for "deployable if needed to support regional and national efforts".

In addition to fighting domestic crime, law enforcement is assuming more duties in protecting America's communities against terrorist threats. Law enforcement plays a large role in the mission of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to lead the national effort to secure America by preventing and deterring terrorist attacks and to protect against and respond to threats and hazards to the nation. Through these grant programs provided by DHS, the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP) and the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), state and local law enforcement receive federal funds to better carry out this mission.

The Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) was funded at \$490 million, roughly \$173 million less than FY11. UASI aims to enhance regional preparedness in 31 high-threat, high-density areas. Of the \$490 million, 25 percent goes directly to law enforcement and crime prevention activities. The State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP), focused on building and supporting preparedness activities, received \$294 million; nearly a 50 percent reduction from FY11.

NAPO was also successful in supporting the funding for other grant programs that benefit law enforcement through homeland security. NAPO was the active law enforcement voice for Representative Michael Grimm's (R-NY) amendment to increase funding for the Urban Search and Rescue Teams Program.

The Urban Search and Rescue Teams Program is half funded by the Department of Homeland Security and the remainder by local police and fire department budgets. By increasing funds for this program to the Senate level of \$35.18 million, more money can be spent on officers and their local communities.

NAPO has served as an active voice for key grant programs that benefit law enforcement in their efforts to maintain Homeland Security. Most state and local police departments are the victims of budget reductions, leaving them understaffed and underfunded. The same is true at the federal level; funding for vital law enforcement programs has been significantly reduced. Although funding levels may have been diminished, the responsibilities of law enforcement have not.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT **NAPO'S FIGHT FOR PUBLIC PENSIONS**

With less than 100 days until November's Presidential and Congressional elections, now is a good time to reflect on the status of public pensions and how they have been affected since 2010. Going forward NAPO will work to anticipate potential pension strategies and tactics beyond 2012.

Protecting the public pensions of our members is one of NAPO's top legislative priorities. NAPO works closely with the Public Employee Retirement Community, the National Public Pension Coalition, the National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems (NCPERS) and the Public Pensions Network.

This July NAPO participated in the third Public Pension Stakeholder Meeting. This group discussed the unprecedented number of proposals that have been advanced by Governors and state legislatures to undermine the retirement security of millions of middle class workers. NAPO contributed to a review of the shortcomings in the pension community. In some cases the exemption of public safety employees is being used by members of the opposition to advance their own agendas. NAPO has also noted the Democrat Party, a traditional supporter of pensions has not given its full and immediate support in this matter.

NAPO and its membership face many challenges in the future. The changing political landscape, national economic trends and public perception all need to be addressed in our efforts to strengthen and better the lives of all law enforcement personnel.

HOUSE ADVANCES BORDER SECURITY LEGISLATION ON FEDERAL LANDS

The House of Representative passed the Conservation and Economic Growth Act, (H.R. 2578), a package of fourteen natural Resource Committee bills. Title 14 of the package included H.R. 1505, the National Security and Federal Lands Protection Act. This legislation authorizes the Secretary of Homeland Security to have immediate access to any public lands managed by the Federal Government for purposes of securing borders.

Protection and preservation of national lands is important. However, NAPO believes this should not be sacrificed at the expense of our national security. Border Patrol Agents are unable to access portions of the 20.7 million acres along our Southern borders and 1,000 miles of our Northern borders. H.R. 1505 allows authorization to the Secretary of Homeland Security to have access to any public lands managed by the Federal Government for the purpose of securing the border.

Criminal elements have taken advantage of the United States protection of federal lands. The burden of patrolling our boarders by state and local officers can be relieved by allowing access for our Border Patrol Agents to keep watch over the millions of acres of federal land.

Although there has not been a companion bill introduced, Senator John McCain (R-AZ) successfully submitted a companion amendment during committee consideration of the Department of Homeland Security Authorization Act of 2011. While NAPO is interested in the protection of federal lands we are even more committed to strengthening national security.

THE COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING PROGRAM
AWARDS FY12 COPS HIRING GRANTS

The COPS Office announced the FY12 COPS Hiring Grant recipients. More than \$111 million was awarded to local public safety agencies in 220 cities and counties. The grants will fund over 600 new law enforcement positions and save an additional 200 positions recently lost or in jeopardy of being cut due to local budget cuts.

All new law enforcement positions funded in the COPS FY12 Hiring Program must be filled by recent military veterans who have served at least 180 days since September 11, 2001. Please see the list for the awardees [here](#).

Save the Date!

**NAPO's 25th Annual Police, Fire, EMS & Municipal
Employee Pension & Benefits Seminar**

Sunday, February 17 – Tuesday, February 19, 2013
Encore at Wynn Las Vegas

NAPO is pleased to announce our first event of 2013: NAPO's 25th Annual Police, Fire, EMS & Municipal Employee Pension & Benefits Seminar to be held at *Encore at Wynn Las Vegas*, in Las Vegas, Nevada, February 17-19, 2013.

We are excited to move in a new direction by partnering with Opal Financial Group. NAPO has been listening carefully to our attendees' concerns and suggestions and we are happy to offer you a 2013 seminar with a better venue, more relevant topics, timelier agenda and easy online registration for both the conference and hotel. Registration form and information is available [here](#). Be sure to take advantage of "early bird" rates by registering before 12/31/12 and save \$100.