



# The Washington Report

**The Newsletter of the National Association of Police Organizations**

*Representing America's Finest*

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**March 1, 2016**

## **Appropriations Face a Bumpy Road as Process Begins**

The fiscal 2017 appropriations process began last week in Congress with the House Appropriations Committee holding 20 hearings on the Administration's budget request for various federal departments, agencies and programs. The process continues this week with another 26 hearings scheduled. Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) vowed at the end of last year that Congress would spend 2016 focusing on moving the 12 fiscal 2017 appropriations bills rather than scrambling to pass an omnibus spending package before time runs out. Congress has not been able to do this since 1994.

The bipartisan budget agreement that passed at the end of last year set funding levels for fiscal 2016 and fiscal 2017, which was supposed to make the appropriations process easier. However, the majority of House conservatives are opposed to the budget agreement because it set spending levels higher than they wanted, which puts House leadership in a tenuous position as Democrats will protest any cuts to the agreed upon funding levels.

In addition to the disagreement over funding levels for fiscal 2017 within the Republican caucus, the appropriations process will most likely be affected by election-year politics, fights around President Obama's eventual Supreme Court nominee, and a much shorter than normal work schedule for Congress due to the November elections. These issues will not only impact Congress' ability to move appropriations bills, but will affect its ability to pass legislation in general.

NAPO is currently working with Senators Bob Menendez (D-NJ), Charles Grassley (R-IA), Maria Cantwell (D-WA) and Representatives Dave Reichert (R-WA) and Bill Pascrell (D-NJ) on "Dear Colleague" letters to Senate and House appropriators in support of providing adequate funding for the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) program and the COPS Hiring Program in the fiscal 2017 Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill. We are working to garner co-signers to the letters as a show of support for these vital programs.

NAPO will keep its members updated on the status of our priority funding programs as the appropriations process continues to move forward. If you have any questions, please contact Andy Edmiston at [aedmiston@napo.org](mailto:aedmiston@napo.org).

### Sources:

McCrimmon, Ryan. (February 29, 2016). "Caught in House's Anti-Spending Zeal, Rogers Seeks Middle Ground". CQ.com. <http://www.cq.com/doc/4842439?2&eapa>

McCrimmon, Ryan and Mejdrich, Kellie. (February 22, 2016) "Six Snags that May Throw Spending Bills into 'Regular Disorder'". CQ.com. <http://www.cq.com/doc/4837731?8&eapa>

## **NAPO on the Hill: Meetings with Senate Majority Leader's Office; House Law Enforcement Caucus; Senate Judiciary Committee**

NAPO, together with other law enforcement organizations, had several meetings to discuss our priority legislation for the remainder of this session of Congress. We met with the Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's (R-KY) staff, staff from the House Law Enforcement Caucus, and Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Charles Grassley's (R-IA) staff. Specifically, we discussed the Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) Grant Reauthorization Act, the Thin Blue Line Act, the Children of Fallen Heroes Scholarship Act, the Fallen Heroes Flag Act, and draft legislation that would make reforms to the PSOB program and restore the Department of Defense (DOD) 1033 program. In each of these meetings, we made clear that these are the bills we want to see passed into law before the end of the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress. NAPO is meeting with the pertinent Congressional leadership to ensure that we have their support on these issues, which is essential to moving these important bills to the floor for a vote.

The BVP Grant Program is a critical resource for state and local jurisdictions. This program has issued more than one million lifesaving vests to 13,000 state and local law enforcement agencies throughout the country since it was established in 1999. 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.

The Thin Blue Line Act is critical as proven most recently by the February 20<sup>th</sup> attack on New York City police officers Andrew Yurkiw and William Reddin by a career criminal who seemed determined to violently attack police. Violent crimes such as that will be deterred by establishing stricter penalties for those who harm or target for harm law enforcement officers. Any persons contemplating harming an officer must know that they will face serious punishments. Increased penalties make important differences in the attitudes of criminals toward public safety officers, and ensure protection for the community.

The Children of Fallen Heroes Scholarship Act would eliminate the expected family contribution (EFC) used to determine financial need in the case of a Pell Grant-eligible student whose parent or guardian died in the line of duty. In addition to receiving an automatic zero EFC, children of public safety officers who died in the line of duty would qualify for the maximum Pell Grant award (\$5,815 for FY16-17) if he or she was less than 24 years old or enrolled at an institution of higher education at the time of the parent or guardian's death. A Federal Pell Grant, unlike a loan, does not have to be repaid. Pell Grants usually are awarded only to undergraduate students who have not earned a bachelor's or a professional degree.

The Fallen Heroes Flag Act would allow members of Congress to honor a deceased public safety officer who died in the line of duty by providing to the family, at their request, a Capitol-flown flag. The flag would be accompanied by a certificate expressing a message of sympathy signed by either the Speaker of the House or Senate Majority Leader and the Senator or Representative providing the flag. This bill will allow members of Congress to honor these brave individuals for their heroism and extend a gesture of sympathy and gratitude to the immediate family.

The PSOB Office must be reformed in order to deal with the unacceptable delays in claims determinations. NAPO, together with the other PSOB stakeholders, is proposing legislation that would ensure that the PSOB Office is processing and deciding claims in a fair and timely manner and that the process is transparent and straightforward for those who have lost their loved ones or have become seriously disabled in the line of duty. NAPO will keep our members up to date on the status of our legislative proposal to reform the PSOB program.

The DOD 1033 program, which allowed state and local law enforcement to acquire military surplus equipment used in search and rescue operations, disaster response, and active shooter situations that they otherwise would not be able to afford, was severely limited by an Executive Order in October 2015. NAPO is fighting to get state and local law enforcement agencies access to this equipment restored and is supporting draft legislation that would repeal the President's Executive Order. For more information on the effect of the Executive Order and NAPO's position, please read our [letter to Congressional leadership](#).

Staff in all of the meetings seemed supportive of our efforts to move this package of priority bills, with varying levels of concern over how big of a lift it will be to move a few of these bills to the House and Senate floors for a vote. We have a lot of work to do to ensure these bills move through Committee, but we are confident we will have the support necessary when they are put up for a vote.

If you have any questions about NAPO's meetings on the Hill or the issues addressed, please contact Andy Edmiston at [aedmiston@napo.org](mailto:aedmiston@napo.org).

## **NAPO Victory! Congress Passes Eric Williams Correctional Officers Protection Act**

In a victory for NAPO, Congress passed the Eric Williams Correctional Officers Protection Act on February 24, 2016. This bill was sponsored by **Senators Patrick Toomey (R-PA)** and **Bob Casey (D-PA)** in the Senate and **Congressman David McKinley (R-WV)** in the House. This legislation would protect federal corrections workers by allowing them to carry pepper spray. It is named after Eric Williams, a Federal Corrections Officer in Pennsylvania who was brutally killed by an inmate in 2013.

The legislation would make permanent a Federal Bureau of Prisons pilot program that allows correctional workers to carry pepper spray. Additionally, it would expand the pepper spray availability to medium and higher security facilities and require federal correctional workers to complete training courses before carrying and using the spray.

NAPO thanks Senators Toomey and Casey and Congressman McKinley for their leadership on this issue. The bill is now headed to the President's desk for signature.

If you have any questions about the Eric Williams Correctional Officer Protection Act, please contact Andy Edmiston at [aedmiston@napo.org](mailto:aedmiston@napo.org).

## **NAPO's Sponsor/Cosponsor Spreadsheet**

NAPO's updated "Sponsor/Cosponsor" spreadsheet is available at the following link: <http://www.napo.org/washington-report/sponsor-cosponsor-spreadsheet/>. The spreadsheet accompanies the latest "Legislative Positions" document, which is available at the following link: <http://www.napo.org/washington-report/legislative-priorities/>

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 will update this spreadsheet regularly, and continue to ensure our voice is heard on Capitol Hill.

If you have any questions about any of the legislation that NAPO is currently working, please contact Andrea Edmiston at: [aedmiston@napo.org](mailto:aedmiston@napo.org).

**May 12, 2016**  
**2016 Lobby Day**  
**Legislative Update &**  
**NAPO's Annual Legislative Awards Luncheon**

Please join NAPO on May 12th for our Legislative Day on Capitol Hill. Use this opportunity to lobby Congressional Representatives and Senators on behalf of your members concerning the issues which affect law enforcement. Prior to lobbying Capitol Hill, plan to attend NAPO's Legislative Breakfast for an update on NAPO's legislative priorities, results to date from the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress, and to receive handouts to use during Hill visits. While on Capitol Hill, be sure to stop by NAPO's Legislative Luncheon in the Cannon Caucus Room, where several Congressmen and Senators will be recognized for their continued support of Law Enforcement.

**Schedule of Events**

|                                   |                                       |                   |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| NAPO Legislative Update Breakfast | JW Marriott Hotel                     | 9:00am – 10:30pm  |
| Capitol Hill Visits               | Capitol Hill                          | 10:30am – 12:00pm |
| NAPO Legislative Awards Luncheon  | Cannon House Office Building Room 334 | 12:00pm – 1:30pm  |
| Capitol Hill Visits               | Capitol Hill                          | 1:30pm – 5:00pm   |

*For assistance setting up your Capitol Hill appointments, contact Andy Edmiston, NAPO's Director of Governmental Affairs, at (800) 322-6276 or [aedmiston@napo.org](mailto:aedmiston@napo.org).*

The registration fee of \$125.00 per person includes the Legislative Update Breakfast, Handouts, and the Congressional Awards Lunch. Please contact Elizabeth Loranger, NAPO's Director of Events, at (800) 322-6278 or [eloranger@napo.org](mailto:eloranger@napo.org) if you have any questions regarding the seminar or hotel arrangements.

NAPO has reserved a block of rooms at JW Marriott Hotel. Room rates are \$239 per night. To make your reservation, please call (800) 228-9290 and tell them you are with NAPO. In order to receive the reduced rate, reservations must be made by April 20. The hotel is expected to sell out, so please make your hotel reservations early.

**Register online at [www.napo.org](http://www.napo.org) or complete the [registration form](#) and return to NAPO at [eloranger@napo.org](mailto:eloranger@napo.org) or Fax to (703) 684-0515 by MAY 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**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.**