



# The Washington Report

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

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November 12, 2013

## NAPO WASHINGTON REPORT

### NAPO's Executive Director Discusses New COPS Office Director with Attorney General Holder

On November 7, 2013, NAPO's Executive Director, Bill Johnson, participated in a teleconference with Attorney General Holder to discuss the Department of Justice's Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office's new director, Ron Davis. Johnson expressed NAPO's support of the new COPS Director and eagerness to work with Davis.

Davis has been the Chief of Police for the City of East Palo Alto, California since 2005, and has a strong background in community-policing efforts. NAPO maintains close communications with the COPS office and looks forward to working with Davis to advance community policing efforts within state and local agencies.

### NAPO Briefings on Capitol Hill - Driver's Privacy Protection Act & Officer Sean Collier Campus Police Recognition Act

Over the past week, NAPO has continued its efforts to modify the recent amendment to the Driver's Privacy Protection Act (DPPA) and garner additional support for the Officer Sean Collier Campus Police Recognition Act by meeting with staffers who work for the following members of House Judiciary Committee: **Congressman Ron DeSantis (R-FL)**, **Congressman Doug Collins (R-GA)**, **Congressman Randy Forbes (R-VA)**, **Congressman Mark Amodei (R-NV)**, and **Congressman Darrell Issa (R-CA)**.

The DPPA requires state motor vehicle departments to receive permission from individuals before their personal motor vehicle record may be sold or released. The DPPA amendment authorizes a private right of action for knowing violations, and a court may award damages in the amount of \$2,500 for each time a record was accessed, as well as attorney fees and other litigation costs. Law enforcement officers are subject to these stringent punishments, even if they did not review files with criminal intent.

NAPO used each of the above meetings to stress the negative impacts of the recent DPPA amendment on the law enforcement community, and to propose modifications to the amendment. During each of the meetings, NAPO stressed its commitment to helping with any efforts necessary to modify the amendment language.

Each of the staffers was receptive to our proposed language modifications to the DPPA amendment, which include adding a clause that explains that penalties will be applied only if persons access information with the specific intent to secure an economic benefit. Also, NAPO proposes removing the \$2,500 penalty for a violation of this act, as well as

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adding a statement that explains there must be repeated disregard of this law for action to be taken. If the language is not modified, law enforcement officers will be subject to large fines, and even the loss of their licenses for *de minimus* actions.

NAPO also discussed the Officer Sean Collier Campus Police Recognition Act, (sponsored by Congressman Michael Capuano (D-MA)), with each of the staffers noted above. This legislation would amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 by adding campus police officers to the Department of Justice's Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program. This bill would define a "campus police officer" as a police officer who is authorized to enforce the criminal laws and is employed by an institution of higher education. The change would be retroactive to April 15, 2013 - the date of the Boston bombings. NAPO has worked closely with Congressman Capuano and his staff on efforts to add cosponsors to this legislation, currently supported by the entire Massachusetts delegation, and plans to continue these efforts to ensure the passage of this important bill.

**NAPO will continue to aggressively lobby members of Congress to gain support for our proposed language changes to the DPPA amendment, as well as garner additional cosponsors to support the Officer Sean Collier Campus Police Recognition Act. We will keep our members updated on the status of these initiatives.**

### **NAPO's Executive Director Meets with ATF Director B. Todd Jones**

On November 5, 2013, NAPO's Executive Director participated in a meeting with the new Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF), B. Todd Jones. Director Jones provided an update on ATF's outreach and assistance to state and local law enforcement agencies.

Senior ATF officials, including Assistant Director of the Office of Enforcement Programs and Services, Arthur Herbert, Assistant Director (Field Operations) Ron Turk, Special Agent in Charge Sam Rabadi, Assistant Special Agent in Charge Ashan Benedict, and Deputy Assistant Director (Human Resources & Professional Development) David McCain, also attended the meeting.

NAPO looks forward to working with Director Jones. We will provide our members with updates on all future interactions with Director Jones.

### **NAPO Responds to Proposals to Arm TSA Agents**

NAPO has contacted every member of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, the Senate Subcommittee on Aviation, Operations, Safety and Security (Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation), and the House Subcommittee on Transportation Security (House Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee), to express strong concerns about recent proposals to issue firearms and grant arrest authority to Transportation Security Administration (TSA) screeners to carry out what have always been understood to be law enforcement duties

NAPO stressed that sworn and trained police officers, accountable to their own local public jurisdictions, should continue to be utilized for all law enforcement tasks. Armed responses should remain the duty of state and local law enforcement officers who already possess the appropriate training, experience, and equipment. Creating a new class of TSA screeners to carry out law enforcement duties would be an extremely expensive undertaking that diverts agents from their primary task of screening passengers. Overlapping law enforcement and TSA duties will inevitably jeopardize public safety.

NAPO's Executive Director, Bill Johnson, plans to follow-up with all of the members of Congress we have contacted in the coming weeks to ensure these proposals are not acted upon.

## **NAPO Supports the Victims of Child Abuse Reauthorization Act**

On November 5, 2013, NAPO pledged its support for the Victims of Child Abuse Reauthorization Act of 2013, which will provide a safe place for child victims and help law enforcement hold perpetrators accountable for their actions.

Child Advocacy Centers employ a multi-disciplinary team to ensure the best outcomes for both the child victim and law enforcement. For the child victim, the Centers are a non-threatening place where a specialized interviewer can elicit critical information while minimizing the traumatizing impact of re-living the events of abuse. For law enforcement, the information obtained in a forensically sound manner aids investigations and bolsters prosecutions, resulting in enhanced public safety. Use of Child Advocacy Centers leads to faster criminal charging decisions in sexual abuse cases, increased felony prosecutions of child sexual abuse, and lower average per-case-cost.

The limited federal investment in training and support of licensed, multi-disciplinary Child Advocacy Centers is a critical piece of providing the law enforcement and family services that child victims deserve. Federal support maintains high quality standards at Centers through research, training, and accreditation. As a result, these Centers represent the very best in federal-state and public-private partnerships.

The Victims of Child Abuse Act programs have consistently garnered broad bipartisan support in both the Senate and the House of Representatives. This year's reauthorization is led by the co-chairs of the Senate Law Enforcement Caucus, Senator Coons (D-DE) and Senator Roy Blunt (R-MO), along with Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL) and Senator Mazie Hirono (D-HI).

## **NAPO Discusses Mission and Top Priorities with Senator Klobuchar's Staff**

On November 7, 2013, NAPO met with **Senator Amy Klobuchar's (D-MN)** staff to discuss our mission and top legislative priorities. In addition to providing a briefing on NAPO's proposed modifications to the recent amendment to the DPPA, NAPO took the opportunity to highlight our support for key legislation that Senator Klobuchar sponsors, including the Substance Abuse and Labeling Toxic Substances Act, which will address the growing problem of issues associated with the synthetic drugs. NAPO also noted our support of the Metal Theft Prevention Act. NAPO worked with the Senator's office on an amendment to the Metal Theft Prevention Act, which will ensure law enforcement officers are able to access all necessary information to solve metal theft cases.

Additionally, NAPO noted our commitment to passing the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act, the National Blue Alert Act of 2013, and the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program Reauthorization Act. (Senator Klobuchar cosponsors each of these pieces of legislation).

NAPO will continue to work closely with Senator Klobuchar's office to ensure our legislative priorities remain at the top of the Congressional agenda.

If you have any questions about any of the issues noted above, please contact Melissa Nee at: [mnee@napo.org](mailto:mnee@napo.org).

### **Works Cited:**

United States. Cong. Senate. *Victims of Child Abuse Act Reauthorization Act of 2013*. 113th Cong. S. Bill. Print.

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