



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS

Strongest Unified Voice for America's Law Enforcement

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Thursday, January 8, 2009

NAPO AND LEADERS OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY JOIN SENATOR LEAHY ON CAPITOL HILL, ENDORSE ERIC HOLDER FOR UNITED STATES ATTORNEY GENERAL

Statement of Tom Nee

NAPO President

Thank you, Chairman Leahy. On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), I would like to thank you for all you have done to support the law enforcement community. It is a pleasure to be here today and stand with you and representatives of the nation's leading law enforcement and criminal justice organizations, in support of Eric Holder for United States Attorney General.

As the top law enforcement official in the nation, the Attorney General sets the policies for how the federal government relates to and works with state and local law enforcement. NAPO believes Mr. Holder has the experience and knowledge necessary to run the Department of Justice and create a comprehensive, multilateral national crime fighting strategy in which state and local law enforcement and criminal justice sectors play key roles.

The duty of every law enforcement officer in America is to serve and protect the people of our communities. As such, we need the personnel and tools to do our best to fight crime and, as a part of a national crime fighting strategy, we require the full support of the federal government. State and local law enforcement in America is being dangerously shortchanged. In a time when city and state budget coffers are tighter than ever, our state and local police departments are being passed over for the funding they need to fight crime and terrorism.

To illustrate what many police departments and agencies are currently experiencing, on the first of this New Year, the Boston police department was told it might be forced to lay off as many as 200 officers or about 10% of its patrol force because of cuts in state funding. Wiping out their hiring efforts and their staffing levels is a formula for disaster. My fear is that this will result in an increase of violent crime, which not only makes our jobs harder and more dangerous it lowers the standard of living for the citizens and visitors of Boston.

Mr. Holder knows the value of community policing and its importance to keeping our nation's communities safe. He was instrumental in developing the Community Oriented Policing Services Program – the COPS program – which put over 100,000 cops on the street and helped us bring violent crime to its lowest level in 30 years. Additionally, NAPO knows Mr. Holder respects the knowledge and perspective of the men and women working to protect our neighborhoods, cities and states, and has shown he will solicit and listen to our counsel.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

WILLIAM J. JOHNSON

Executive Director

As Attorney General, NAPO believes Mr. Holder can hit the ground running and will make the Justice Department more efficient and effective, particularly in regards to programs that aim to help states and municipalities fight crime. State and local law enforcement will once again be regarded as a vital part of the national crime-fighting strategy and we will be provided the tools and resources necessary to protect our neighborhoods from crime. Therefore, NAPO is proud to endorse Eric Holder for Attorney General of the United States.

I now invite the representatives of the nation's leading law enforcement and criminal justice organizations – the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the International Union of Police Associations, the National Association of Assistant U.S. Attorneys, the National District Attorneys Association, the National Narcotics Officers' Associations' Coalition, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, and the National Sheriffs' Association – to come up and announce their support for Eric Holder for Attorney General.