



The Washington Report

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

December 2, 2022

NAPO's 30th Annual TOP COP Awards

Nominate an Officer Today!

Don't let your TOP COPS nominations get lost in the holiday shuffle! The *January 11, 2023, deadline* for nominations will be here before you know it.

Please take the time to nominate examples of outstanding police work for this prestigious award. We count on you, our members, to help us get the word about TOP COPS out and obtain nominations for officers nationwide. Join us in honoring America's Finest by nominating a case today. The [nomination form](#) must be postmarked or faxed to (703) 684 - 0515 by *January 11, 2023*. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact NAPO's Director of Events, Elizabeth Loranger, at elorange@napo.org or (703) 549-0775.

2023 will mark the 30th year that NAPO has hosted the TOP COPS Awards®. The TOP COPS Awards® Dinner will take place on May 12th at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C., again coinciding with National Police Week.

Nominate an officer today and with your help and partnership, the TOP COPS Awards® will continue to be a tremendous success!

NAPO Meets with BJA Director

NAPO's Executive Director Bill Johnson and Government Affairs Director Andy Edmiston met with the Director of the Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), Karhlton Moore, to discuss NAPO's priorities and how we can continue to support each other in moving those priorities forward.

NAPO has long supported BJA as a vital resource for state and local law enforcement as it houses our priority programs, including the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Program, the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program, the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program, the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program, the Body-Worn Camera grant program and tool-kit, and it supports and funds

the Officer Safety and Wellness Working Group in collaboration with the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), amongst others.

The biggest priority for NAPO is ensuring the PSOB Program implements the Public Safety Officer Support Act and the Protecting America's First Responders Act swiftly and in accordance with Congressional intent, including Program outreach to newly covered officers and families. We also shared our significant concerns with how deeply involved the PSOB and Office of Justice Programs (OJP) legal counsels are in the application and approval process for claims. NAPO continues to be frustrated by how difficult it is for officers and their families to receive their rightly earned death or disability benefits despite the many legislative fixes we have worked to pass to make the process easier and more transparent.

We also discussed the current crisis agencies across the country are facing with recruitment and retention, including possible new programs and grants to help agencies hire and retain qualified officers. We highlighted the Recruit and Retain Act, which we worked on with Senators Deb Fischer (R-NE) and Chris Coons (D-DE), that, among other purposes, would create a Pipeline Partnership Program within the DOJ's Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office. This program would encourage partnerships between schools and law enforcement departments to foster a stronger local pipeline for law enforcement careers. While the COPS Office does not fall under BJA, it is a proposal that BJA could emulate through its Byrne JAG Grant.

In terms of grant programs, we once again raised the issue that small departments are having difficulties in getting needed grant funding. The law enforcement assistance grant programs through the DOJ provide invaluable resources, training, and technical assistance to state and local law enforcement agencies, helping to keep our communities safe. However, small agencies across the country find themselves getting left behind due to their size and lack of resources for participating in the onerous Federal grant solicitation process. We urged Director Moore to streamline the grant process and narrow the grant requirements to only those that are pertinent to the grant itself.

NAPO appreciates the support of BJA and the work that we do with them. Director Moore stated he appreciates NAPO's close relationship with the Bureau and that they are here to help in any way possible. The collaborative relationship between NAPO and BJA has helped us move many of our priorities forward and we look forward to continuing that work.

NAPO Victory! House Passes Bill Providing Mental Health Training for Law Enforcement

In a win for NAPO, the House overwhelmingly passed the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Reauthorization Act, S. 3846, by a vote of 389 – 22 on November 29. NAPO is a long-time supporter of the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program (JMHCPC), which grew out of the Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act (MIOTCRA), and worked closely on this reauthorization bill. It is a top priority for us, as it supports crisis intervention teams and training programs for law enforcement and corrections personnel to identify and respond to incidents involving individuals with mental health conditions.

While the TBI and PTSD Law Enforcement Training Act (Public Law 117-170), which was signed into law back in August, reauthorized the JMHCPC for an additional 5 years at \$54 million per year, the Reauthorization Act makes important improvements to the program, including:

- Strengthening support for mental health courts and crisis intervention teams;
- Supporting diversion programming and training for state and local prosecutors;
- Strengthening support for co-responder teams;
- Supporting the integration of 988 into the existing public safety system;
- Amending allowable uses to include suicide prevention in jails and information sharing between mental health systems and jails/prisons;
- Amending allowable uses to include case management services and supports; and
- Clarifying that crisis intervention teams can be placed in 911 call centers.

The Senate passed the bill by unanimous consent on June 23. The House amended the bill to reflect the earlier reauthorization of the program so it is on its way back to the Senate where we are working with the bill's sponsors, Senators John Cornyn (R-TX) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), to have it quickly taken up and sent to the President's desk to be signed into law.

NAPO thanks Senators Cornyn and Klobuchar and Representatives Bobby Scott (D-VA), Steve Chabot (R-OH), Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX), and Tom Emmer (R-MN) for their steadfast support and leadership on this issue.

NAPO-Backed Law Enforcement De-Escalation Training Act Vote Fails in House

On November 29, the House took up the Law Enforcement De-Escalation Training Act (S. 4003), under suspension of the rules, which requires two-thirds approval of those voting and present to pass. Due to late opposition to the bill by Republicans, the vote failed to garner the two-thirds necessary to pass with the final vote being 247-160. Only 3 Democrats voted against passage and merely 40 Republicans voted for it.

This important bill builds off of the existing Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne-JAG) structure to provide a dedicated stream of funding to local and State law enforcement agencies to train their officers—as well as mental health professionals working with those officers—in de-escalation tactics, alternatives to use of force, safely responding to mental or behavioral health crises, successfully participating on a crisis intervention team, and making referrals to community-based mental and behavioral health services and support and other social programs.

On the House floor, Republicans claimed that there is already grant funding that can be used for this training and that it is soft on crime. NAPO worked closely with our partners in the law enforcement, mental health, and criminal justice communities in developing this important bill to ensure it gives state and local law enforcement the resources and flexibility needed to train their officers in effectively responding to individuals in crisis. Providing officers with this training is in no way soft on crime – it is about officer and civilian safety in what can be a dangerous situation.

Further, existing grant programs that fund such training, like the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program, are not solely focused on law enforcement officer training as this bill is, making it a much-needed resource for departments. NAPO has long supported funding for training programs for law enforcement to identify and respond to incidents involving individuals with mental health, behavioral health and substance abuse issues. Law enforcement officers are all too familiar with calls for service that repeatedly bring them into contact with people whose mental illnesses and behavioral health issues are not being adequately addressed. Although these incidents are generally resolved safely, on rare occasions they can involve use of force, exposing both the law enforcement officer and the person in crisis to serious risk. Without adequate

training and tools to assist officers in responding to and de-escalating these situations, officers face tremendous obstacles in managing these incidents.

The national law enforcement community supports the Law Enforcement De-Escalation Training Act as do over 50 mental and community health organizations. It is unclear why there was a last-minute push by Republicans to oppose this bill without so much as a prior indication as to what are their concerns with it. We have reached out to House Republican leadership to ensure this does not reflect what is to come next year regarding law enforcement assistance grant programs under Republican control of the House.

The bill passed the Senate by unanimous consent on August 1. Final passage of the Law Enforcement De-Escalation Training Act this Congress remains a priority for NAPO, and we are urging House leadership to take it up on the House floor under regular order. We know we have the votes to pass it, we just need to be given the floor time. NAPO thanks those Members of Congress, particularly the 40 Republicans, who voted in favor of the bill. We also thank the bill's sponsors, Senators John Cornyn (R-TX) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), for their steadfast efforts to get this across the finish line.

NAPO's Legislative Positions & Sponsor/Cosponsor Updates

NAPO's updated "Sponsor/Cosponsor" spreadsheet is available on [NAPO's website](#). The spreadsheet accompanies the latest "[Legislative Positions](#)" document, which is also available on the NAPO website. NAPO's Legislative Positions is a document that highlights all the legislation that we have taken an official position on or are monitoring during the 117th Congress. It is continually updated to reflect the work we are doing on Capitol Hill.

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 updates this spreadsheet regularly and continues to ensure our voice is heard on Capitol Hill.

Register Now for NAPO's Pension & Benefits Seminar

January 29 - 31, 2023

Caesars Palace Hotel & Casino ~ Las Vegas, Nevada

Register Here

Please join us at [NAPO's 34th Annual Police, Fire, EMS, & Municipal Employee Pension & Benefits Seminar](#), January 29 – 31, 2023, at Caesars Palace Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada. Our goal for the 2023 Pension & Benefits Seminar is to educate pension and union representatives along with their providers on the latest issues surrounding the pension and benefits industry.

The seminar will focus on the current challenging situation and causes for concern in today's pension and benefits environment. Soaring inflation, stagflation, and a general recession are rearing their heads, and the market, after years of run-up, has turned bearish. Politically, both parties will be analyzing the results of the midterm elections, and how those results will influence the economic policies which are a major dividing

line between them. Global corporate taxation, socially conscious investing, mounting national debt, and expansion of IRS taxation and reporting powers are just some of the issues being debated. We will examine these areas and more as we evaluate the effect of these trends on public employment benefits and security, and the overall economic situation for the near- and mid-term.

Take an active role in improving the future of your fund by registering today. You will find information regarding registration, hotel reservations and the full agenda on NAPO's website: www.napo.org/PB23 or download the attached brochure and fax to NAPO at (703) 684-0515.

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

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