



# The Washington Report

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

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October 28, 2014

## **NAPO WASHINGTON REPORT**

### **NAPO Contacts Members of Senate Judiciary Committee to Oppose Death in Custody Reporting Act**

On October 20, 2014, NAPO sent the attached letter of opposition to the Death in Custody Reporting Act (S. 2807) to every member of the Senate Judiciary Committee. This bill requires states that receive allocations under specified provisions of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to report to the Attorney General certain information regarding the death of any person who is detained, arrested, en route to incarceration, or incarcerated in state or local facilities or a boot camp prison. The bill imposes penalties on states that fail to comply with such reporting requirements.

NAPO is concerned about this legislation, which is expected to be reviewed by the Senate Judiciary Committee when Senators return from recess. NAPO strongly feels that this bill will negatively impact the availability of important resources for law enforcement to use to keep our communities safe. Specifically, NAPO is concerned that the Death in Custody Reporting Act pursues its goals through penalties to the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) Program - a critical resource for law enforcement.

Law enforcement departments across the nation continue to keep our communities safe with scarce resources. This legislation has the potential to jeopardize public safety through Byrne JAG penalties. The Byrne JAG Program provides resources for multi-jurisdictional drug and gang task forces, information sharing and technology, county jails, prosecutors, drug courts, and juvenile delinquency and drug treatment courts. Losing access to a percentage of this funding will undermine law enforcement's mission to keep the public safe.

We understand the desire for timely and accurate data. However, this effort should not be pursued at the expense of the law enforcement community, which is already operating on limited resources.

Over the past week, NAPO has contacted key staffers on the Senate Judiciary Committee to voice our concerns about this bill. We will keep our members updated on the status of this legislation. If you have any questions about this bill, please contact Melissa Nee at: [mnee@napo.org](mailto:mnee@napo.org).

# NAPO Participates in Comprehensive Law Enforcement Review Project Teleconferences

NAPO is involved in a comprehensive law enforcement review project, which was initiated in response to a proposal, co-authored by NAPO, recommending a criminal justice review. The Attorney General requested the COPS Office to lead the project, with input from a diverse group of law enforcement stakeholders.

The goal of the project is to create a foundational document that provides an overview of key developments and challenges in American law enforcement, focusing on the last fifty years. The document will briefly summarize what is understood about the current state of law enforcement from both research evidence and practice. It will also seek to identify the gaps in knowledge in the law enforcement field that might inform future discussion, research, and practice.

Over the past week, NAPO participated in the following teleconferences to move the project forward:

- **Policy Reform and Implementation**: The second teleconference on this topic focused on immigration policy.
- **Future of Policing**: Subtopics that were discussed included: policing in a new economy; collaboration and partnerships; developing effective leaders; police agency of the future; and recruitment, hiring, and retention.
- **Alternatives to Incarceration and Strategies for Re-entry**: The second teleconference on this topic focused on effective ways to assist citizens with mental health conditions who come into contact with the criminal justice population.
- **Leadership, Culture, and Integrity**: Subtopics that were discussed included: procedural justice and policy legitimacy; fair and impartial policing; racial reconciliation; community engagement; and consent decrees.
- **Officer Safety and Wellness**: Subtopics that were discussed included: suicide reduction efforts; officer killed in line of duty reviews; and safety equipment.

NAPO looks forward to continuing to work with DOJ leadership and fellow law enforcement stakeholders on this important project. We will keep our members updated on the status of this initiative. If you have any questions about NAPO's efforts on the criminal justice review project, please contact Bill Johnson at: [bjohnson@napo.org](mailto:bjohnson@napo.org).

## NAPO Meetings on Capitol Hill – House Judiciary Committee

On October 24, 2014, NAPO met with senior staffers for the following members of the House Judiciary Committee: **Congressman Louie Gohmert (R-TX)**, **Congressman Cedric Richmond (D-LA)**, and **Congressman Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY)**. NAPO continues to pursue our top legislative priorities through the end of this Congress, and ensure that these priorities remain at the top of the Congressional agenda when the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress begins. NAPO used the aforementioned meetings to outline our highest priorities, which include the following initiatives:

**Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) Grant Act**: The BVP Grant Program provides Federal funds to state and local law enforcement departments to assist state and local law enforcement efforts to purchase bullet resistant vests. NAPO continues to expend all available efforts to garner additional cosponsors for the House and Senate versions of this bill.

**Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Improvement and Reauthorization Act**: This bill would reauthorize the COPS Program for five years and raise the current hiring cap from \$75,000 to \$125,000. The COPS Office has been extremely successful in implementing and carrying out its designated objectives. Since its creation, the COPS Office has assisted over 13,000 of the nation's 18,000 jurisdictions with over \$14 billion in funding to hire more than 125,000 additional officers. Reauthorizing this program will allow for the continuation of a highly successful program that keeps our communities safe.

**Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act (JMHCA):** The Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act (MIOTCRA) created the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program (JMHCPC) to help states and counties design and implement collaborative efforts between criminal justice and mental health systems. The JMHCA reauthorizes the successful MIOTCRA and extends the JMHCPC for five years. The JMHCPC can help law enforcement agencies across the United States in their responsibilities in assisting citizens with mental health issues.

**Social Security Fairness Act:** This bill would strike the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) formulas currently used to calculate Social Security benefits. Both formulas were enacted in the 1980s because Congress was concerned Social Security paid unintended benefits to workers who had spent most of their careers in “non-covered” jobs. However, the formulas go too far and penalize workers with split careers who contributed a great deal to Social Security, but retire under their “non-covered” pensions. By significantly scaling back and reducing Social Security benefits for law enforcement officers and their survivors, as GPO and WEP do, officers and their families are provided much less protection against financial difficulties.

NAPO appreciated the opportunity to meet with each of the staffers, and looks forward to working with them in the future. If you have any questions about any of the issues summarized above, please contact Melissa Nee at: [mnee@napo.org](mailto:mnee@napo.org).

## **NAPO Participates in Teleconference Hosted by White House Regarding Ebola Response**

On October 23, 2014, NAPO participated in a stakeholder conference call with Dr. Thomas Frieden, Director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to discuss the U.S. response to Ebola. The discussion, hosted by the White House Office of Public Engagement, focused on the Administration’s efforts to respond to the spread of the Ebola virus. The CDC referred to a full list of initiatives to halt the spread of the virus, including entry/exit screenings and continued monitoring of individuals traveling from impacted countries. Additional information is available at the following site: <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/qa.html>.

On October 17, 2014, NAPO sent [letters](#) of recommendation to the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the Congressional committees with jurisdiction on issues related to the Ebola virus. NAPO recommended ways to inhibit the spread of the virus in the United States through travel restrictions and the implementation of new protocols for those responsible for addressing Ebola threats at airports.

NAPO is very concerned for the safety of our first responders and the public that they protect. We feel strongly that steps can be taken to prevent the spread of this disease. To ensure the safety of our nation, we proposed the following actions to Congressional committee leadership: ban flights from affected nations; require that medical personnel traveling to and from the affected countries, as well as infected Americans traveling to the country for treatment, be transported by specially reserved and monitored designated aircraft; and institute a uniform national protocol among agencies (airport police; Customs and Border Protection; and EMS) responsible for addressing the Ebola threat at airports and other ports of entry.

NAPO will keep our members updated on the status of this issue. If you have any questions, please contact Bill Johnson at: [bjohnson@napo.org](mailto:bjohnson@napo.org).

**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.**



## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

*Representing America's Finest*

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### NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

WILLIAM J. JOHNSON  
Executive Director

October 20, 2014

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senate  
724 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Blumenthal:

On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), I write to you to express concerns regarding the Death in Custody Reporting Act (S. 2807), as NAPO strongly feels that this bill will negatively impact the availability of important resources for law enforcement to use to keep our communities safe.

NAPO is a coalition of police unions and associations from across the United States that serves to advance the interests of America's law enforcement through legislative and legal advocacy, political action, and education. Founded in 1978, NAPO now represents more than 1,000 police units and associations, 241,000 sworn law enforcement officers, and more than 100,000 citizens who share a common dedication to fair and effective crime control and law enforcement.

NAPO is concerned that the Death in Custody Reporting Act pursues its goals through penalties to the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) Program - a critical resource for law enforcement.

Law enforcement departments across the nation continue to keep our communities safe with scarce resources. This legislation has the potential to jeopardize public safety through Byrne JAG penalties. The Byrne JAG Program provides resources for multi-jurisdictional drug and gang task forces, information sharing and technology, county jails, prosecutors, drug courts, and juvenile delinquency and drug treatment courts. Losing access to a percentage of this funding will undermine law enforcement's mission to keep the public safe.

We understand the desire for timely and accurate data. However, this effort should not be pursued at the expense of the law enforcement community, which is already operating on limited resources.

We hope you will consider our position when the Senate Judiciary Committee reviews this legislation. If we can provide any additional information, please feel free to contact me at: (703) 549-0775.

Sincerely,

William J. Johnson  
Executive Director