



The Washington Report

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

March 2, 2015

NAPO WASHINGTON REPORT

NAPO's Executive Director Testifies at Task Force on 21st Century Policing Listening Session



On December 18, 2014, President Obama signed an Executive Order to create the Task Force on 21st Century Policing, and announced its members, which include NAPO. **NAPO is the only police rank and file group in the nation to have a seat on the Commission itself.** Our Treasurer, Sean Smoot, of the Illinois PB&PA, was appointed by the President to the Commission.

On February 23, 2015, NAPO's Executive Director, Bill Johnson, testified at the Task Force's sixth listening session, which focused on "Officer Safety & Wellness."

Due to time limitations, Johnson focused his remarks on the following topics: workplace due process; labor/management partnerships; safety equipment; and officer stress. Johnson made the following recommendations to the panel:

- Establish a national law enforcement officer bill of rights to ensure procedural due process.
- Encourage agency leaders and the public to recognize and take advantage of the benefits of police unions and associations.
- Select leaders from the agency's own rank-and-file, as these officers have the best understanding of the challenges faced in their communities, as well as the most promising methods of building mutual trust.
- Ensure every officer is equipped with properly fitted and current body armor.
- Ensure officers' families are not penalized by the inappropriate application of mandatory wear policies.
- Provide PSOB death benefits to an officer's family if the officer's death was the result of PTSD

Johnson's full written testimony is available at the following site:
http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/submissions/Johnson_Bill_Testimony.pdf.

NAPO was grateful for the opportunity to testify at the listening session, and we will continue to make our voice heard as the Commission finalizes recommendations.

If you have any questions about the Task Force on 21st Century Policing, please contact Bill Johnson at: bjohnson@napo.org.

Source:

Office, COPS. "#PolicingTaskForce Voices from the Field Panel @yost_zakhary @Cops_Director @fopchuck @Napolice @nationalsheriff Pic.twitter.com/Lj43s5axrN." Twitter. Twitter, 23 Feb. 2015. Web. 23 Feb. 2015.

NAPO's Executive Director Meets with New Jersey Congressional Delegation

Last week, NAPO's Executive Director, Bill Johnson, joined New Jersey State PBA President, Pat Colligan; Executive Vice President, Marc Kovar; and Director of Government Affairs, Robert Nixon, in meetings with the New Jersey Congressional Delegation. The group met with **Congressman Bill Pascrell (D-NJ)** on February 24, 2015. The following day, the group met with **Congressmen Pascrell, Tom MacArthur (R-NJ), Donald Norcross (D-NJ), Leonard Lance (R-NJ), and Donald Payne (D-NJ)**. Staffers for the following members also joined the meeting: **Congressmen Albio Sires (D-NJ), Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-NJ), and Frank LoBiondo (R-NJ)**.

The group discussed the following pieces of legislation with the delegation:

- **Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) Grant Program Reauthorization Act:**
 - The BVP Grant Program provides matching funds to state and local law enforcement departments to assist with efforts to purchase bulletproof vests for their officers. 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-resistance 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.
 - This legislation would reauthorize the highly successful BVP Grant Program and ensure that all of America's law enforcement officers are provided with the life-saving protection they need.

- 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. We look forward to working with the bill's sponsor, Congressman LoBiondo, and other members of Congress to pass this important bill.
- **James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Reauthorization Act:**
 - 9/11 first responders and survivors continue to suffer from serious health conditions caused by their contact with toxic substances at Ground Zero. These heroes put their lives on the line to serve us, and must be afforded every resource available as they cope with chronic health conditions caused by exposure to toxic chemicals at the World Trade Center.
 - The James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Reauthorization Act would ensure the continuation of the World Trade Center Health Program and the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund to make certain that 9/11 heroes and their families receive every resource available.
 - NAPO continues to work with members of Congress and fellow stakeholders to reintroduce and pass this important legislation during the 114th Congress.
- **National Blue Alert Act:**
 - The National Blue Alert Act would enable the dissemination of information on suspects connected with the death or injury of a law enforcement officer. This is critical legislation, especially as individuals are increasingly willing to harm law enforcement officers. Those who are willing to harm the police are the most dangerous members of our society. A National Blue Alert system would facilitate expeditious apprehension of these individuals, which would increase public safety.
 - NAPO is working with members of Congress and fellow stakeholders to reintroduce and pass this legislation during the 114th Congress.

The delegation was very receptive to NAPO's proposals. We look forward to continuing to work with these members of Congress to advance our top priorities.

If you have any questions about these meetings, please contact Bill Johnson at: bjohnson@napo.org.

NAPO's Executive Director Meets with Vanita Gupta

On February 25, 2015, NAPO's Executive Director, Bill Johnson, met with Vanita Gupta, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division.

Johnson used the meeting to discuss consent decrees and the Civil Rights Division's investigation of law enforcement officers. They also discussed ways to improve the relationship between DOJ's Civil Rights Division and law enforcement where possible. Johnson emphasized the importance of including true rank and file representatives in the process.

Acting Assistant Attorney General Gupta assured Johnson that she would work to ensure better communications between her office and law enforcement. She also said that she would provide NAPO with advance notice before announcements are made that would impact law enforcement. She furthered that NAPO would have the ability to sit down with her to present our perspective prior to final decisions being made on cases and matters her office is handling. She also asked NAPO to contact her directly with concerns or criticisms of any programs or activities they are conducting.

NAPO will continue to stay engaged and keep our members updated on the Civil Right Division's work. If you have any questions about this meeting, please contact Bill Johnson at: bjohnson@napo.org.

NAPO VICTORY!

Senate Judiciary Committee Passes Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act

On February 26, 2015, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee without opposition. This legislation would boost support for and protection of victims of human trafficking by increasing law enforcement resources, enhancing victims' services, and increasing penalties in an effort to combat child sex trafficking, child pornography, sexual exploitation, and human trafficking.

NAPO has worked closely with the bill's sponsor, **Senator John Cornyn (R-TX)**, and fellow stakeholders to garner support for this legislation. We are committed to continuing to work with Senator Cornyn and his staff to ensure this legislation is passed during the 114th Congress.

If you have any questions about the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, please contact Melissa Nee at: mnee@napo.org.

Senate Judiciary Committee Approves Loretta Lynch Nomination

On February 26, 2015, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted 12-8 to approve Loretta Lynch as the next U.S. attorney general. Three Republicans voted in her favor - Orrin Hatch of Utah, Jeff Flake of Arizona, and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina - along with all Democrats on the committee.

President Barack Obama officially nominated Loretta Lynch, a United States attorney from New York, as the next Attorney General of the United States at a White House ceremony on November 8, 2014. Lynch is an experienced prosecutor, with deep relationships inside the Justice Department, and a long history of litigating political corruption, terrorism, and organized crime cases.

NAPO continues to evaluate Attorney Lynch's nomination, and we are closely following the confirmation process. We will continue to keep our members updated.

If you have any questions about this nomination, please contact Bill Johnson at: bjohnson@napo.org.

NAPO Meetings on Capitol Hill – Ax the Tax on Middle Class Americans' Health Plans Act

On February 27, 2015, NAPO met with a senior staffer for **Congressman Frank Guinta (R-NH)** to discuss the Ax the Tax on Middle Class Americans' Health Plans Act, sponsored by the Congressman.

Beginning in 2018, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act imposes a new 40% annual excise tax on taxpayers who are covered by high-cost, or "Cadillac" health insurance plans. NAPO continues to fight against the impending "Cadillac" health insurance plan tax, as the new tax will negatively impact public safety officers across the nation. This bill will repeal the "Cadillac Tax," and ensure public safety officer and their families are not unduly burdened.

NAPO pledged our support for this important bill immediately after it was introduced. We look forward to working with Congressman Guinta and his staff to pass this important legislation.

NAPO also used the meeting to provide information on the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program Reauthorization Act, National Blue Alert Act, James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Reauthorization Act, and the Don't Tax Our Fallen Public Safety Heroes Act. (The Don't Tax Our Fallen Public Safety Heroes Act clarifies that both federal and state death benefits for survivors of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty are not subject to federal income tax).

If you have any questions about our efforts to repeal the "Cadillac Tax," or any of the legislation noted above, please contact Melissa Nee at: mnee@napo.org.

NAPO Contacts Congressional Leadership to Request Support for the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Reauthorization Act

Last week, NAPO sent an individual letter and a joint law enforcement stakeholder letter to Congressional leadership, advising them of our strong support for the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Reauthorization Act. The letters were sent to **House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH)**, **Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY)**, **House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)**, and **Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV)**. The letters stressed our strong support for the Zadroga bill, and requested assistance in moving the legislation through the Congress as expeditiously as possible. (NAPO's letter is attached to this report for your convenience and review).

As noted above, the Zadroga bill's two critical programs providing medical treatment and compensation for 9/11 heroes – the World Trade Center Health Program and the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund – are set to expire in October 2015 and October 2016 respectively. This legislation would continue these programs for 25 more years, through 2041.

9/11 responders and survivors are still battling serious health crises resulting from exposure to the toxins at Ground Zero. More than 30,000 9/11 responders and survivors have an illness or injury caused by the attacks or their aftermath, and over two-thirds of those have more than one illness. Many are disabled and can no longer work. They are suffering from a host of chronic diseases: asthma, obstructive pulmonary disease and gastroesophageal reflux disease, and many more.

Medical research has identified more than 60 types of cancer caused by 9/11 toxins. More than 2,900 people have been diagnosed with cancers caused or made worse by the aftermath of the attacks - more than 800 New York Fire Department members and more than 550 New York Police Department personnel are struggling with serious 9/11-related illnesses, not including the more than 70 firefighters and 60 NYPD officers who have died from their 9/11-related illnesses.

Responders came from all over the country to aid in the response to the attacks. And some area residents, workers, and survivors have since moved and are currently receiving care in cities and states across the country. Participants enrolled in the World Trade Center Health Program for treatment currently reside in all 50 states and in 429 of the 435 Congressional districts in the country.

These heroes put their lives on the line to serve us, and must be afforded every resource available as they cope with chronic health conditions caused by exposure to toxic chemicals at the World Trade Center.

This legislation will also honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect our nation. James Zadroga, a New York City Police Department Detective and member of NAPO, died of respiratory disease caused by his exposure to

toxic chemicals at Ground Zero. It is our obligation and duty to remember these heroes and ensure that survivors who risked their lives to protect us continue to receive the treatment and compensation that they deserve.

NAPO looks forward to working with members of Congress and key law enforcement stakeholders to reintroduce and pass this important legislation during the 114th Congress.

If you have any questions about this bill, please contact Melissa Nee at: mnee@napo.org.

Source:

"Lawmakers Introduce Critical Reauthorization of James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act."

Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney. N.p., 17 Sept. 2014. Web. 19 Sept. 2014 <<http://maloney.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/lawmakers-introduce-critical-reauthorization-of-james-zadroga-911-health>>.

NAPO Meetings on Capitol Hill - CORRECTIONS Act

On February 27, 2015, NAPO met with senior staffers for **Senators John Cornyn (R-TX)** and **Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI)** to discuss the Corrections Oversight, Recidivism Reduction, and Eliminating Costs for Taxpayers in Our National System (CORRECTIONS) Act.

The following are the main tenets of the bill:

- Requires all eligible offenders to undergo regular risk assessments to determine whether an offender has a low, medium, or high-risk of re-offending.
- Excludes all sex offenders, terrorism offenders, violent offenders, repeat offenders, major organized crime offenders, and major fraud offenders from earning credits under the program.
- Encourages participation in recidivism reduction programs and productive activities, like prison jobs.
- Contains no new authorized spending, and requires the Bureau of Prisons to partner with faith-based groups and non-profits.
- Allows earned time credits for low-risk prisoners of up to 10 days for every 30 days that the prisoner is successfully completing a reoffender reduction program or productive activity.
- Allows medium risk prisoners to earn a 5 day for 30 day time credit while successfully completing recidivism reduction programs and productive activities. These offenders would only be able to use these credits if they demonstrate a substantial reduction in their probability of reoffending as a result of participation in programs.
- Does not allow high risk offenders to use any time credits unless they reduce their risk levels to a lower tier.
- Would allow certain low risk offenders who demonstrate exemplary behavior to spend the final portion of their earned credit time on community supervision.

NAPO discussed this legislation at length with Senator Cornyn's staff last Congress, and we continue to closely monitor the legislation.

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.

Congress Averts Homeland Security Shutdown With One-Week Extension

Congress managed at the last minute on February 27th to avert a partial shuttering of the Department of Homeland Security, passing a one-week funding measure for the agency. President Obama signed it shortly before the midnight deadline.

The arrangement is expected to prolong talks about longer-term DHS funding until at least early this week.

NAPO is closely monitoring this process, and we will keep our members updated on the latest developments. If you have any questions about the funding bill, please contact Melissa Nee at: mnee@napo.org.

Source:

Sullivan, Sean, and Mike DeBonis. "Congress Averts Homeland Security Shutdown with One-week Extension." *Washington Post*. The Washington Post, 28 Feb. 2015. Web. 01 Mar. 2015.

Webinar to Assist Law Enforcement Agency Applications for BJA's FY 2015 Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program

On March 4, 2015, from 2:00pm to 3:00pm, the Council of State Governments Justice Center (CSG Justice Center) will host a webinar for law enforcement agencies to discuss a funding opportunity to improve collaborative law enforcement-mental health programs for people with mental disorders. In this webinar, representatives from the CSG Justice Center and two law enforcement agencies with Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program (JMHCPC) grants will discuss the various specialized police response models and how the grant program could support them.

JMHCPC grants support innovative cross-system collaboration for individuals with mental disorders or co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders who come into contact with the justice system. On February 18, 2015, the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) released the JMHCPC [grant solicitation](#). Applications are due April 14, 2015.

BJA is placing a priority on applications from law enforcement agencies that demonstrate a collaborative project with mental health partners to plan, implement, or expand a justice and mental health collaboration program. Previous grants to law enforcement agencies have supported assessment and referral centers, training for officers, and information systems and technologies to improve officer and agency responses to persons with mental disorders.

To register for the webinar, click [here](#).

NAPO expended much effort to garner support for the JMHCPC during the last Congress, and was successful in building a strong bipartisan list of cosponsors in both chambers. NAPO looks forward to continuing to work with fellow stakeholders during this Congress to pass this important legislation.

If you have any questions about the JMHCPC, please contact Melissa Nee at: mnee@napo.org.

Please monitor NAPO's website www.napo.org, and Facebook page: National Association of Police Organizations, and follow us on Twitter at [NAPOpolice](#) for breaking news and updates.

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

Representing America's Finest

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February 23, 2015

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The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
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The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Speaker, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Pelosi, and Minority Leader Reid:

On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), I am writing to you to express our full support for legislation to reauthorize the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act. Passing a bill to reauthorize the Act before its expiration next year is critically important to tens of thousands of first responders whose health continues to be impacted by the attacks of September 11, 2001.

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 stands ready to support any efforts necessary to pass legislation to ensure the continuation of the World Trade Center Health Program and the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund. 9/11 first responders and survivors continue to suffer from serious health conditions from their contact with toxic substances at Ground Zero. These heroes put their lives on the line to serve us, and must be afforded every resource available as they cope with chronic health conditions caused by exposure to toxic chemicals at the World Trade Center.

This legislation will not only reauthorize programs to provide critical medical treatment and compensation for 9/11 heroes, but it will also honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect our nation. James Zadroga, a New York City Police Department Detective and member of NAPO, died of respiratory disease caused by his exposure to toxic chemicals at Ground Zero. It is our obligation and

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

WILLIAM J. JOHNSON
Executive Director
General Counsel

duty to remember these heroes and ensure that survivors who risked their lives to protect us continue to receive the treatment and compensation that they deserve.

Congress must pass legislation to reauthorize the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act this year to ensure our heroes continue to receive every resource available. We urge you to work with us to pass this important legislation.

If we can provide any additional information, please feel free to contact me at: (703) 549-0775.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William J. Johnson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William J. Johnson
Executive Director