



# The Washington Report

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

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August 4, 2023

## Senate Passes NAPO National Police Week Priorities

On July 26, before heading off for a five-week recess, the Senate unanimously passed by voice vote three of NAPO's priority bills: the Recruit and Retain Act, the Project Safe Neighborhoods Reauthorization Act, and the Strong Communities Act. NAPO has been working since these bills were approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee during National Police Week with Committee leadership, the sponsors of the bills, and staff to move them to the Senate floor for a vote and we thank them for their support.

**S. 546, Recruit and Retain Act** would boost recruitment opportunities for state and local law enforcement agencies by expanding the Department of Justice's Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Program to help agencies that are understaffed and struggling to attract new applicants. It would also create a new program to encourage partnerships between schools and police departments to foster a stronger local pipeline for law enforcement careers. It is sponsored by Senators Deb Fischer (R-NE), Chris Coons (D-DE), John Cornyn (R-TX), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Tom Cotton (R-AR), Thom Tillis (R-NC).

**S. 1387, Project Safe Neighborhoods Reauthorization Act of 2023** would reauthorize the Project Safe Neighborhood (PSN) Program for five years, ensuring that state and local law enforcement can continue to fight gang and firearms-related violent crimes in our cities and our communities in the most efficient and effective manner. It also expands the allowable uses of the grant funding to include overtime costs for officers and the hiring of crime analysts and law enforcement assistants to aid agencies participating in the program. It was introduced by Senators John Cornyn (R-TX), Gary Peters (D-MI), Charles Grassley (R-IA), Thom Tillis (R-NC), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Ted Cruz (R-TX), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), and Chris Coons (D-DE).

**S. 994, Strong Communities Act of 2023** would allow for COPS Hiring Program funds to be used to pay for local law enforcement recruits and officers to attend schools or academies if the recruits agree to serve in the communities in which they live. This legislation is sponsored by Senators Gary Peters (D-MI), John Cornyn (R-TX), Richard Durbin (D-IL), Thom Tillis (R-NC), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Ted Cruz (R-TX), Marsha Blackburn (R-TX), Alex Padilla (D-CA), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), and Jon Ossoff (D-GA).

We are now focusing our efforts on working with the House Judiciary Committee and leadership to move and pass these important bills.

# Registration Now Open for NAPO's 2023 Legal Seminar

October 22 – October 24, 2023

Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe – Resort, Spa & Casino  
Incline Village, Nevada

Join NAPO at our [Legal Seminar, Defending the Protectors: Current Issues for Attorneys & Law Enforcement Leaders](#). This is the perfect seminar for those representing Public Safety Employees and Associations.

**Earn up to 12.5 Hours of CLE Credits, including 2 Hours of Ethics!**

**For registration and information including hotel reservations, transportation discounts, and updates to the meeting agenda check out NAPO's 2023 Legal Seminar webpage:**

[www.napo.org/legal23](http://www.napo.org/legal23)

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

## Vital 9/11 WTCHP Funding Added to Senate-Passed NDAA

NAPO supported and strongly advocated for an amendment sponsored by Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Mike Braun (R-IN) to the Senate's National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that would provide much-needed funding for the 9/11 World Trade Center Health Program (WTCHP) and fully authorize coverage for Department of Defense military and civilians who responded to the attack on the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. The amendment was approved by the Senate by an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 94-4 and included in the NDAA.

While Congress appropriated an additional \$1 billion for the WTCHP as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY 2023, that funding was still well short of the nearly \$3 billion needed to make the program whole and avoid any cuts to care and services for 9/11 responders and survivors. This amendment partially addresses the remaining funding shortfall the WTCHP is set to face in Fiscal 2029.

The main driver of the Program's costs is the healthcare services (initial health evaluations, annual monitoring, diagnostics, and treatment, including pharmaceuticals) it provides to over 124,000 members. These services and a rise in participation by injured 9/11 responders and survivors have increased costs beyond what was projected in the 2015 reauthorization of the WTCHP, causing the \$3 billion funding shortfall.

This amendment also expands eligibility to 9/11 responders at the Pentagon and Shanksville sites who were active-duty Department of Defense military or civilians, along with other Federal employees who were inadvertently excluded from the program.

NAPO fought hard for the passage of the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act in 2010 and its reauthorization in 2015 to ensure our nation took care of the victims and first responders who are coping with 9/11-related chronic health conditions. James Zadroga, a New York City Police Department Detective and member of NAPO, died of respiratory disease caused by his exposure to toxic chemicals during rescue and recovery efforts at Ground Zero. Today, the WTCHP provides medical treatment and monitoring for over 124,000 9/11 responders and survivors who live in every State and in 434 out of 435 Congressional Districts.

Maintaining this provision as part of the final negotiated NDAA between the Senate and the House is a top priority for NAPO.

## **NAPO Priority FEND Off Fentanyl Act Included in Senate-Passed NDAA**

On July 27, the Senate passed its version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal 2024, which included the language of the Fentanyl Eradication and Narcotics Deterrence (FEND) Off Fentanyl Act. This bill, sponsored by Senators Tim Scott (R-SC) and Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and supported by NAPO, will help combat the country's fentanyl crisis by enhancing current law so U.S. government agencies can more effectively disrupt illicit opioid supply chains and penalize those facilitating the trafficking of fentanyl. It also ensures that sanctions are imposed not only on the illicit drug trade, but also on the money laundering that makes it profitable.

By including the FEND Off Fentanyl Act in the NDAA, the Senate is moving forward what will be a critical component in the fight against the spread of this deadly poison in our communities. It will sanction transnational organizations and cartels that traffic fentanyl and its precursors, helping to stop the flow of this deadly poison into our country. NAPO firmly believes we cannot act only after this drug enters our country; we must fight it before it crosses our borders.

NAPO thanks Senators Scott and Brown for their leadership and efforts to include this bill in the NDAA and we call on the House to maintain this important provision during conference committee negotiations.

## **House NDAA Contains NAPO-Backed Amendment Restoring Full Access to 1033 Program**

On July 14, the House passed its version of the Fiscal 2024 NDAA by a largely party-line vote of 219-210. It included an amendment from Representative Michael Waltz (R-FL) that NAPO supported, which would restore state and local law enforcement's unfettered access to surplus military equipment through the Department of Defense's 1033 Program.

President Biden's 2022 police reform Executive Order reinstated the restrictions that were put in place by President Obama's 2015 Executive Order on what equipment state and local law enforcement could acquire through the 1033 Program and how that equipment must be used. Those restrictions were immediately reestablished and expanded for the 1033 Program as well as for Department of Homeland Security and Justice Department grants, effectively eliminating state and local law enforcement's access to needed surplus federal equipment.

Programs like the 1033 Program have been vital resources in allowing state and local law enforcement to acquire items used in search and rescue operations, disaster response, and active shooter situations that they otherwise would not be able to afford. This equipment has not led to the “militarization” of police, but rather has proven to be essential not only in protecting communities against violent criminals, but also in responding to natural disasters, which are unfortunately increasing in frequency.

As we have mentioned numerous times to the Administration, the legitimate and well-demonstrated needs of officers are being overlooked due to the optics of law enforcement agencies obtaining this equipment from the federal government. NAPO thanks Rep. Waltz for his support and efforts to include this important amendment in the House-passed NDAA and we will fight to ensure it passes as part of the final bill.

## **NAPO in the News**

NAPO Executive Director Bill Johnson was interviewed for an August 2, 2023, article in *Stateline* entitled, “[After George Floyd’s murder, more states require release of police disciplinary records](#)”. This article discusses the calls for police disciplinary records to be made public that began after the 2020 death of George Floyd and state and local lawmakers’ need to address transparency while protecting officers’ due process and privacy rights. Johnson stated that officer safety and rights should be given equal priority to transparency.

“What’s included should be substantiated. It should be included only after the officer was provided due process, and it should be significant misconduct,” said Bill Johnson, the executive director of the National Association of Police Organizations, in an interview with *Stateline*. He said that includes an officer having the opportunity to respond to allegations and having a “neutral fact finder” investigate.

“If it’s going to be something that’s useful, where you are safeguarding the public against persons who should not be in law enforcement, you have to be careful about, ‘What are we really talking about here? What gets included and how do we know that we can rely on this?’”

NAPO is working to protect the privacy and rights of officers, particularly their due process rights, when it comes to officer personnel records being made public, whether at the federal, state, or local level. As Johnson mentioned in the article, we have long held that only those allegations or findings of serious misconduct that are substantiated and adjudicated should be included in any public record release or database.

NAPO will continue to ensure our members’ voices are heard loud and clear on the Hill, with the Administration, and in the media.

## **Bill to Increase Access to Fentanyl Test Strips Introduced**

NAPO pledged our support for the Fentanyl Safe Testing and Overdose Prevention Act, which was introduced by Senators Bill Cassidy, M.D. (R-LA), John Cornyn (R-TX), Chris Coons (D-DE), Tom Cotton (R-AR), and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN). This bill would help prevent deaths from fentanyl poisoning by increasing access to fentanyl test strips.

The spread of fentanyl in our communities is devastating. It is being mixed with already deadly illicit drugs, hidden in counterfeit drugs, and being peddled at alarmingly high rates. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, more than 106,000 Americans died from drug overdoses in 2021 and opioids were involved in over 70,601 of those deaths, a significant increase in opioid-related overdose deaths over previous years. Many of these deaths were from using synthetic analogues of fentanyl.

This legislation amends the Controlled Substances Act to exempt the possession, sale, or purchase of fentanyl drug testing equipment, including test strips, from criminal punishment. Fentanyl test strips are small strips of paper that can detect the presence of fentanyl in various types of drugs, including cocaine, methamphetamine, and heroin, no matter what the form (pills, powder, and injectables).<sup>1</sup> Access to these test strips would help prevent overdose deaths by giving people the ability to know if a drug or pill they are about to take has been mixed with fentanyl.

NAPO continues to fight for resources to attack and prevent the spread of fentanyl in our communities. Preventing overdoses in the first place by expanding access to test strips would help alleviate the public health crisis and allow law enforcement to focus its efforts on deterrence.

## **NAPO Supports Bill to Provide Quality Trauma Kits to Law Enforcement**

Senators John Cornyn (R-TX), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Thom Tillis (R-NC), and Chris Coons (D-DE) introduced the American Law Enforcement Sustaining Aid and Vital Emergency Resources (SAVER) Act, which would help equip law enforcement officers with quality trauma kits so they can respond immediately and effectively if a civilian or fellow officer experiences a traumatic injury during a call. NAPO supports this bill as it establishes baseline standards for trauma kits purchased through the Department of Justice's Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) Program, helping to ensure all officers have access to effective trauma kits that can save lives.

While many departments are equipping or have already equipped their officers with quality trauma kits and trained them on their use, there are law enforcement agencies across the country where officers do not have access to such kits. With law enforcement being the first responders on a scene, giving officers access to high-quality emergency medical kits through Byrne JAG will save lives.

NAPO thanks Senator Cornyn, Whitehouse, Tillis, and Coons for their support and we look forward to working with them to pass the American Law Enforcement SAVER Act.

***The Washington Report is taking a hiatus for the August Recess along with Congress. We will be back in your inboxes on September 1, unless something comes up before then that requires your attention. In the meantime, please monitor NAPO's website, [www.napo.org](http://www.napo.org), and Facebook page: [National Association of Police Organizations](#), and follow us on X at [NAPOpolice](#) for breaking news and updates.***

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/stopoverdose/fentanyl/fentanyl-test-strips.html>