



The Washington Report

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

July 26, 2024

NAPO Endorses Donald Trump for President

On July 24, NAPO announced our endorsement of Donald J. Trump for President of the United States. The NAPO endorsement recognizes Mr. Trump's steadfast and public support for our men and women that represent the thin blue line protecting our communities.

As President, he directed the Attorney General to aggressively prosecute those who attack our officers; signed into law the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act; reinstated state and local law enforcement's access to lifesaving surplus military equipment; and revitalized the Project Safe Neighborhoods program to help reduce violent crime. We particularly appreciate his unflinching recognition that America's law enforcement officers, just like any other citizens, have Constitutional rights too.

NAPO President Mick McHale joined Mr. Trump on stage at his campaign rally in Charlotte, NC to announce our endorsement of his re-election. You can view his statement [here](#) and our endorsement letter [here](#).

Stakeholders Push to Force House Vote on Social Security Fairness Act

With the Ways and Means Committee deciding not to take action on the Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82) before the House adjourned for a 6-week August recess on July 25, the coalition of stakeholders supporting the bill is pushing Representatives Garrett Graves (R-LA) and Abigail Spanberger (D-VA) to file a discharge petition to try to force the bill to the House floor for a vote. While there was discussion of the Committee possibly moving a proposal to reform the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO), what was offered fell well short the relief presented by the current WEP reform proposals introduced this Congress and was met with opposition from stakeholders, including NAPO.

H.R. 82 currently has 323 bipartisan cosponsors, and we need at least 218 of those cosponsors to sign the discharge petition. There is a difference between cosponsoring a bill and signing a discharge petition. Cosponsoring a bill simply indicates support for it and is certainly not binding when it comes to voting on the bill. Signing a discharge petition, on the other hand, signifies that a Member of Congress will vote for the bill.

A similar move was attempted last Congress, but a vote on the bill was thwarted by the Ways and Means Committee marking up the bill and killing our chances of passing it in the House. Unfortunately, the same obstacle remains in our path: the significant cost of the bill (approximately \$180 billion). The task of getting

218 signatures on to the discharge petition will be a heavy lift, but assuming a petition is filed, NAPO will make every effort to get all 323 cosponsors signed on.

This Congress, the Social Security Fairness Act has seen significant movement and support. We have helped secure two hearings in the House Ways and Means Committee and one in the Senate Finance Committee, and we have garnered 323 cosponsors in the House and 60 in the Senate. This is the year for Congress to finally do what is right and enact the Social Security Fairness Act.

While your Congressional Representatives are back in district for the August recess, campaigning for the November election, urge them to back efforts to move H.R. 82 to the floor for a vote, including a discharge petition, and show their support for protecting the retirement security of our nation's public safety officers.

Contact NAPO's Director of Governmental Affairs, Andy Edmiston, at aedmiston@napo.org or 703-549-0775 for more information on the Social Security Fairness Act and materials you can share with your Member of Congress.

Senate Passes NAPO-Backed SHIELD Act to Protect Victims of Sexploitation

In a victory for NAPO, the Senate passed the Stopping Harmful Image Exploitation and Limiting Distribution (SHIELD) Act, S. 412, sponsored by Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), by voice vote on July 10. In a world where smart phones and devices are used to record and transmit every moment in life, it is becoming increasingly important to protect against malicious sharing of private, explicit images. These online privacy violations exponentially and disproportionately target women and minors.

The SHIELD Act would narrowly establish federal criminal liability for individuals who share private, explicit images without consent. While more than 40 states have enacted statutes in this area, federal intervention is necessary to provide complete and consistent coverage across state lines. We thank Senator Klobuchar for her leadership, and we now focus our efforts on passing this important bill in the House.

NAPO on the Hill: NDAA

The Senate is gearing up to take action on the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2025 (S. 4638) starting as soon as next week, with Senators filing hundreds of amendments they hope to be considered. NAPO is actively supporting four bipartisan amendments to the NDAA: S. Amdt. 2528, the Law Enforcement and Victim Support Act; S. Amdt. 2423, the Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act; S. Amdt. 2175, the Combating Illicit Xylazine Act; and S. Amdt. 2177, the Invest to Protect Act. We are working with the amendment sponsors and have urged Senate leadership and Senate Armed Services Committee leadership and staff to support the inclusion of these amendments.

S. Amdt. 2528, the Law Enforcement and Victim Support Act, offered by Senators John Cornyn (R-TX) and Jon Ossoff (D-GA), is comprised of nine bills that passed unanimously out of the Senate, but have not been taken up in the House. It includes several priority bills for NAPO: the Fighting PTSD Act, the American Law Enforcement SAVER Act, Project Safe Neighborhoods Reauthorization Act, the Strong Communities Act, and Project Safe Childhood Act. These bills help protect the mental health and physical wellbeing of law enforcement officers, provide resources to address the recruitment crisis the profession is facing, and give departments tools to fight violent crime and protect our innocent children from exploitation.

NAPO also supports S. Amdt. 2423, the Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act, sponsored by Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), which would recognize carcinogen-related cancers as line of duty injuries under the Department of Justice's Public Safety Officer's Benefits (PSOB) Program. Much like the PACT Act did for our military and veterans, this amendment recognizes the physical consequences of first responders inhaling deadly chemical fumes and particulate matter from car crashes, house fires, and chemical spills, amongst other events and disasters.

NAPO supports two amendments offered by Senators Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV) and Charles Grassley (R-IA): S. Amdt. 2175, the Combating Illicit Xylazine Act, which would add xylazine, a deadly drug compounding the opioid crisis, to the Controlled Substances Act, and S. Amdt. 2177, the Invest to Protect Act, which would help provide much needed training and resources to small police departments.

Every one of these amendments provides support and resources for state and local law enforcement, who play a significant role in our nation's security, and gives them the tools to effectively protect our communities. NAPO will be fighting for their inclusion in the NDAA.

While the Senate may start considering the NDAA next week, it is not expected that they will finish deliberation on the bill before adjourning for August recess on August 2. We will spend August recess shoring up support for our amendments.

Fiscal 2025 Appropriations Update

The House Appropriations Committee approved the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) appropriations measure on July 9 along party lines. The bill would reduce the budget for the Department of Justice by nearly \$1 billion mainly through cuts to federal law enforcement agencies, particularly the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). Despite the large cut, the bill maintains relatively steady funding for state and local law enforcement assistance grant programs and NAPO's priority grant programs.

The House was expected to take up the FY 25 CJS spending measure next week, but House leadership has struggled to pass appropriations bills as many contain controversial provisions that do not have the support of the entire Republican caucus. The House adjourned for a 6-week recess on July 25 having passed only five of the twelve appropriations bills it set out to pass before August. The CJS bill is one of the more contentious measures and certainly would have had trouble garnering the necessary votes to pass, especially with Democrats lock-step in opposition and it earning a veto threat from President Biden.

The Senate Appropriations Committee began marking up their versions of the FY 25 appropriations bills this week, including the CJS bill. The Committee-approved CJS spending measure maintains relatively level spending for state and local law enforcement grant programs, including NAPO's priority grants.

We are grateful that the Senate continues to support the COPS Program and the Byrne JAG Program and the various grants, programs, and initiatives they provide resources for, but we feel there is more that can be done to assist state and local law enforcement in their efforts to serve and protect our communities. For example, the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act and the Supporting and Treating Officers in Crisis Act programs remain at \$10 million under the FY 25 CJS appropriations measure. The law enforcement community needs much more than the \$10 million currently appropriated for these programs to adequately address officers' mental health needs. A significant funding increase is necessary for the establishment of confidential peer mentoring programs in cities and states across the country. This is a priority for which we will continue to push for greater funding.

With the Senate adjourning for August recess at the end of next week, Congress will have just three weeks when it returns from recess in September to fund the government before the end of the fiscal year. It is widely expected that Congress will pass a continuing resolution to extend current funding levels for the federal government until either after the November election or into 2025.

NAPO will continue to work with both House and Senate leadership and appropriators to bolster funding for vital federal, state, and local law enforcement programs.

NAPO Joins Coalition Letter Calling on the President to Close the De Minimis Trade Loophole

NAPO joined with fellow members of the [Coalition to Close the De Minimis Loophole](#) in a [letter to President Biden](#) urging the Administration to use its current authorities to close this dangerous loophole.

The de minimis loophole allows packages valued at less than \$800 to enter the U.S. without facing any taxes, fees, or inspection. As a result, this cripples domestic manufacturers and workers, undermines retailers, strains law enforcement resources, and facilitates the free flow of illegal and dangerous products and illicit drugs, particularly fentanyl and its precursors, into the country.

A prime example of how drug traffickers are using the de minimis loophole, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) [announced](#) on July 22 that a Chinese national was indicted for his part in the importation of what is believed to be one of the largest amounts of fentanyl precursors found in the country. The charges allege that the defendant and his associates shipped over 2,000 kilograms of fentanyl precursor chemicals from China into the United States – enough fentanyl precursor chemicals to kill millions of Americans.

The illicit drugs were mailed in approximately 100 separate shipments and were able to avoid law enforcement interdiction by declaring them to have a de minimis value of less than \$800 and intermixing the boxes containing the precursor chemicals with other de minimis items. Once the packages were in the United States, the defendant and his co-conspirators then shipped them to Mexico to be used in the manufacturing of fentanyl.

Closing the de minimis loophole will help staunch the surge of illicit narcotics like the ones just seized by the DEA and HSI that are exploiting this exemption to wreak havoc across the country and protect and safeguard the lives of our children, families, and friends. In this moment of crisis, we need to use every weapon we have to curb the unfettered flow of imported fentanyl.

NAPO views substantial reform or the closing of this trade loophole as necessary to remove significant fentanyl trafficking routes into this country and essential to any national strategy to end the fentanyl crisis. While we are pursuing both an administrative fix and legislative fix to this issue, it is unclear if Congress will act to remedy de minimis this Congress, so it is vital that the Administration act now to close the loophole.

PSOB Office Announces Solicitation for New Grant to Help Support Survivors

The Public Safety Officer's Benefits (PSOB) Program has announced a new grant program to support the families of fallen and catastrophically injured public safety officers by providing assistance with filing

applications for federal benefits for line-of-duty deaths and catastrophic injuries: [**FY24 Public Safety Officers' Benefits \(PSOB\) National Law Enforcement Survivor Support and National Firefighter and First Responder Survivor Support Programs Competitive Grant Solicitation**](#)

This program also provides survivor peer support, counseling services, and resources to survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other first responders nationwide. Additionally, the program recognizes families and fallen officers at memorial events.

Examples of activities that can be funded include:

- Maintain a survivors' network for peer-to-peer counseling and related support for survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other first responders, including survivor retreats offering professional and peer counseling.
- Enhance and deliver online training and technical assistance to support law enforcement agencies as they file for PSOB benefits on behalf of survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other first responders and catastrophically injured public safety officers.
- Develop and implement memorial events during National Police Week and Firefighters Memorial Weekend, including a survivors' conference.
- Establish a formal partnership with a nationally recognized leader in the field of public safety officer suicide to assist survivors and agencies of law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other first responders who have died by suicide by developing and offering survivor support.
- Enhance and implement an initiative to increase awareness of PSOB benefits among law enforcement, firefighter, and other public safety agencies nationwide.

View additional details about the new grant and the solicitation [here](#).

Join NAPO for Our 2024 Fall Seminar

October 20 – 22, 2024
Omni Hotel ~ Corpus Christi, Texas

[Register now](#) for NAPO's 2024 Fall Seminar in Corpus Christi, Texas. Special thanks to Scott Leeton and the Corpus Christi Police Officers Association for hosting NAPO!

This important Seminar will focus on:

- How to effectively communicate with the press when responding to use of force and controversial issues. Participate in mock interviews and press conferences with media experts from television, print and public relations personal. Immediate feedback from the experts will help NAPO members be better prepared to deal with the media in future controversial cases.
- Presidential & national elections, and what the outcome means for control of the Congress and NAPO's legislative priorities.
- Review recent Court decisions as well as other important current issues for Law Enforcement Unions & Associations and the men and women we represent.

The Omni Hotel, located on the Corpus Christi Bay, offers spectacular views of the Bay, a fitness center with an outdoor pool, and the famous rooftop Republic of Texas Bar & Grill. The Hotel is two blocks from

downtown's shopping, restaurants & bars and just 15 minutes to the Airport. The Hotel offers complimentary airport shuttle service.

We need to plan for your arrival. Please register at your earliest convenience. Both online and mail-in registration are available. Information regarding hotel reservations, airline discounts and the agenda are also included [here](#).

The Washington Report is taking a hiatus for the August Recess along with Congress. We will be back in your inboxes on August 30, unless something comes up before then that requires your attention. In the meantime, please monitor NAPO's website, www.napo.org, and Facebook page: [National Association of Police Organizations](#), and follow us on X at [NAPOpolice](#) for breaking news and updates.