



The Washington Report

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

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Social Security Administration Starts Issuing Retroactive Payments

The Social Security Administration (SSA) announced on February 25 that retroactive benefits payments have started to be issued and beneficiaries who were impacted by the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and/or the Government Pension Offset (GPO) will begin receiving their full benefits. According to the SSA, the retroactive benefits, which repay the Social Security benefits lost to GPO and WEP back to January 2024, will be received in a one-time payment by the end of March. Most impacted beneficiaries will begin receiving their increased GPO and WEP-free Social Security benefits in April. Payments will be processed incrementally throughout March, so not everyone will receive their retroactive payments at the same time.

There are some complex cases, particularly GPO cases, where the SSA will need to process the benefit changes manually, which could delay the retroactive payment and monthly benefit increase.

Please refer to the [SSA's detailed and updated FAQ](#) on the implementation of the Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82), which can be found here: <https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/retirement/social-security-fairness-act.html>.

President Signs EO on Health Care Pricing Transparency

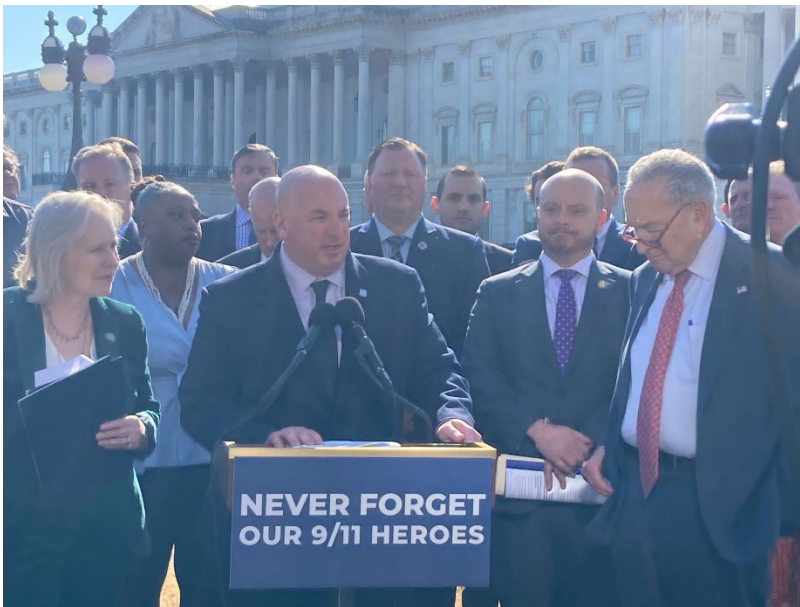
On February 25, President Trump signed an Executive Order on *Making America Healthy Again by Empowering Patients with Clear, Accurate, and Actionable Healthcare Pricing Information*. This executive order will enhance hospital and drug pricing transparency by requiring the disclosure of the actual prices of items and services, updating guidance and regulations to ensure pricing information is standardized and easily comparable across hospitals and health plans, and issuing updated enforcement policies to improve compliance with the transparency reporting requirements.

This executive order is a follow up to one that President Trump issued during his first term in September 2020, *An America-First Healthcare Plan*, which required hospitals to disclose pricing data for all services and provide a user-friendly display for 300 shoppable procedures, as well as mandated insurers reveal negotiated rates, out-of-network payments, and prescription drug costs, and create an online tool for consumers to compare costs.

The February 25 executive order, building upon the 2020 order, will improve transparency and accountability in healthcare costs and support patients as they navigate their way through our nation's complicated healthcare system.

NAPO Participates in Press Conference Supporting Permanently Funding the 9/11 WTCHP

On February 26, Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Charles Schumer (D-NY) and Representatives Andrew Garbarino (R-NY), Laura Gillen (D-NY), and Dan Goldman (D-NY) reintroduced the 9/11 Responders and Survivors Health Funding Correction Act, which would permanently fund the World Trade Center Health Program (WTCHP). Port Authority Police Benevolent Association (PBA) President and NAPO Executive Board Member, Frank Conti, spoke at the press conference, the only law enforcement representative to do so, on the urgent need to ensure the WTCHP is fully and permanently funded so we do not have to come back to Congress begging again to take care of our nation's 9/11 heroes and survivors.



“We walked the halls of Congress in 2010 to enact the World Trade Center Health Program (WTCHP), and again in 2015 to reauthorize this vital program to ensure our nation took care of those suffering from 9/11-related chronic health conditions as a result of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States. Attacks that left many Port Authority Police Officers with severe disabling and life-threatening illnesses contracted during the selfless performance of their duties in the World Trade Center Rescue and Recovery efforts,” said Frank Conti, President of the Port Authority Police Benevolent Association.

“The WTCHP is facing a significant funding gap that, if not addressed by Congress, will impact its ability to provide necessary care to our nation's 9/11 responders and survivors, including the officers we represent,” stated Conti.

“We thank Senator Gillibrand, and Representatives Garbarino and Goldman for their support, and we stand with them in urging Congress to pass the 9/11 Responder and Survivor Health Funding Correction Act now. This is not over...the sacrifice continues.”

The WTCHP, which provides vital care for nearly 140,000 9/11 responders and survivors, is facing a funding shortfall that would cause it to cut medical treatment and monitoring for those still suffering the physical and mental impacts of 9/11. NAPO fought for the enactment and near permanent reauthorization of the WTCHP as we view it as our obligation and duty to ensure that responders, who risked their lives to protect us, and survivors continue to receive the care that they deserve. The 9/11

Responder and Survivor Health Funding Correction Act honors that obligation and ensures the WTCHP is fully funded. We are calling on Congress to pass this important legislation now.

Senate Moves on HALT Fentanyl Act

The Senate Judiciary Committee approved its version of the Halt All Lethal Trafficking of (HALT) Fentanyl Act (S. 331), sponsored by Senator Bill Cassidy (R-LA), on February 27. Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-SD) started floor consideration of the bill by invoking cloture to limit debate on the bill, which succeeded on March 6 with a bipartisan 82-12 vote.

The HALT Fentanyl Act would make permanent the current classwide scheduling of all fentanyl-related substances as Schedule 1 drugs under the Controlled Substances Act, giving law enforcement the tools and resources necessary to combat and deter fentanyl in our nation's communities.

Fentanyl is now the drug most associated with overdoses in the United States. It is being mixed with already deadly illicit drugs, hidden in counterfeit drugs, and being peddled at alarmingly high rates to our nation's youth. 5 out of 10 counterfeit prescription drugs seized by law enforcement in 2024 were laced with a deadly dose of fentanyl. Fentanyl is now the drug most associated with overdoses in the United States. The amount of fentanyl the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) seized in 2024 – nearly 8,000 pounds of fentanyl – represents over 367 million deadly doses.

NAPO reached out to Senators urging their support for the bill and asking them to oppose any amendments to ensure the bill can move quickly to the President's desk to be signed into law before the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) current authority to schedule fentanyl runs out on March 31.

The House passed its version of the bill, H.R. 27, on February 6, by wide bipartisan margins.

House Passes Budget Resolution

The House passed its budget resolution on February 25, which would allow for up to \$4.5 trillion in extended tax cuts and new tax breaks but does not specify what those tax cuts and breaks will be. It also requires Congress to cut \$2 trillion from federal spending over the next ten years, raises the nation's borrowing limit by \$4 trillion, and provides up to \$200 billion in border security funding and up to \$100 billion in defense funding. The budget resolution is the first step in the reconciliation process that Congressional Republicans are using to pass major pieces of President Trump's agenda.

Senate Republicans passed their budget resolution several weeks ago, which is a slimmer budget blueprint that focuses on pursuing the President's border security and defense priorities first and deferring tackling tax legislation until later in the year, in a separate reconciliation bill.

The House and Senate must adopt the same budget resolution before they can take up a reconciliation bill with specific policies, cuts to spending, and tax breaks. Some Republican lawmakers are skeptical that the House-passed plan provides enough fiscal clearance to make President Trump's 2017 tax cuts permanent *and* enact new tax breaks, such as tax exemptions for tips and overtime pay. Others question whether House Republicans, with their very small majority, can pass two reconciliation bills rather than just one big one. The House and Senate are now conferring on their differing budget resolutions to come to an agreement on one path forward.

Once House and Senate Republicans agree to a budget resolution, then the hard work begins of hammering out the details and determining what can and cannot be done through the reconciliation process, which has strict rules to get around the filibuster in the Senate.

This work may be delayed as Congress is facing a possible government shutdown if it cannot pass appropriations to fund the federal government for the remainder of this fiscal year. Federal funding runs out on March 14, and House and Senate appropriators have not been able to come to an agreement on how to fund the government for the rest of FY 2025. It is looking likely that Congress will pass yet another continuing resolution that will last through September 30 and Republicans will focus on FY 2026 appropriations to implement President Trump's priorities.

NAPO continues to press our [tax priorities](#) with Congress and we will keep our members updated as Congress works through this reconciliation process.

NAPO Continues Calls to Close the De Minimis Loophole

On March 4, NAPO participated in a press conference held by Congresswoman Linda Sánchez (D-CA) in support of her bill, the Close the De Minimis Loophole Act (H.R. 1840). The Congresswoman is the new Ranking Member of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Trade and has taken up the fight to close the *de minimis* loophole. This legislation is the strongest and most comprehensive bill yet in addressing the loophole. It would end *de minimis* immediately for China and within 4 months for every other country.

Law enforcement is battling the trafficking of illegal narcotics on multiple fronts, including the international mail system. The *de minimis* loophole is severely exacerbating the opioid crisis by allowing fentanyl and other illegal opioids to enter our country largely uninspected. The closure of this trade loophole is vital to removing significant fentanyl trafficking routes into this country and is essential to any national strategy to end the fentanyl crisis. NAPO supports the efforts of Congresswoman Sanchez to ensure the *de minimis* trade exemption will no longer be a gateway for illicit drugs and goods to cross our borders.

NAPO also joined the Coalition to Close the De Minimis Loophole in a [letter to President Trump](#) urging him to reimpose his proposed ban on duty-free *de minimis* treatment for goods from China and to use his existing executive authority to end *de minimis* for all commercial shipments from all countries.

NAPO on the Hill: National Police Week Priorities

Every year, NAPO works in conjunction with other national law enforcement organizations – both management and labor – to push a list of bills we all agree on and support to move during National Police Week. This past week, we met with the majority and minority staff of the House and Senate Judiciary Committees to discuss the pro-law enforcement legislation we want to see moved during National Police Week 2025 to honor the law enforcement profession.

We discussed the need for legislation to enhance officer safety by increasing penalties for the murder, attempted murder, or assault of federal, state, and local law enforcement officers, the LEOSA Reform Act, a bill to cover exposure-related cancers under the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Program,

and the Reauthorizing Support and Treatment for Officers in Crisis Act. Many of these are bills that have been joint law enforcement priorities for years, but Congress has failed to act on them.

In his address to a Joint Session of Congress on March 4, President Trump called on lawmakers to pass a bill that would mandate the death penalty in cases involving the murder of a law enforcement officer. There are several bills already introduced this Congress that would do this, including the NAPO-backed the Thin Blue Line Act and the Justice for Fallen Law Enforcement Act. We strongly believe that increased penalties for the murder, attempted murder, or assault of a federal, state or local law enforcement officer because of their status as a public safety officer will deter such crimes and bring greater protections to officers and the communities they serve. We feel Congress must act on the President's call to action and make one of these bills a National Police Week priority.

The LEOSA Reform Act would ensure the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act (LEOSA) is more fairly and broadly implemented. The bill would expand the areas qualified, current or retired, officers are allowed to carry a firearm, including on a Gun Free School Zone, on state, local and private property otherwise open to the public, and in certain federal facilities. Furthermore, it would allow qualified officers and retired officers to carry an ammunition magazine of any capacity that is not prohibited by federal law. Importantly, it will reform qualifications standards to alleviate undue burdens for those carrying under LEOSA.

The Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act would cover exposure-related cancers under the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Program for death and disability benefits.

The Reauthorizing Support and Treatment for Officers in Crisis (STOIC) Act would reauthorize the STOIC Program under the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Program which provides grant funding for law enforcement family-support services and establish suicide-prevention programs and mental health services within law enforcement communities.

Our next meetings will be with House and Senate leadership to highlight our priorities and gain their support for our efforts to move these important bills during National Police Week.

NAPO in the News: DOJ Deletes Federal Police Misconduct Database

NAPO's [January 14, 2025 letter](#) to Attorney General Merrick Garland regarding our ongoing concerns with the complete lack of due process for law enforcement officers before their names are added to the National Decertification Index was referenced in a February 20, 2025 *Washington Post* article entitled, "[Justice Department Deletes Database Tracking Federal Police Misconduct](#)". The article is reporting on the deletion of the National Law Enforcement Accountability Database (NLEAD) and any references to it from the Department of Justice (DOJ) website as a result of President Trump repealing the President Biden executive order on police reform.

In addition to quoting directly from our letter, the article notes that "[a]t least one police group had objected that officers weren't given a chance to challenge the information about them before it was entered into the database, and said that only serious misconduct should be entered."

“The National Association of Police Organizations, a coalition of police unions and associations that says it represents 241,000 officers, repeatedly aired its concerns with the database in letters to the Biden administration beginning in 2022. As recently as last month, executive director William J. Johnson [wrote to Attorney General Merrick Garland](#) noting that minor administrative infractions shouldn’t be included in the database, and that officers should have due process available to challenge being included in the data.

Johnson’s Jan. 14 letter expressed frustration that the Justice Department wasn’t listening.

‘Our comments and recommendations on the establishment of a National Law Enforcement Accountability Database have been largely disregarded,’ Johnson wrote. ‘As representatives of rank-and-file officers, it is incredibly concerning that their voices are being ignored.’”

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

NAPO Priority Bills Continue to be Introduced

As we enter the third month of the 119th Congress, we continue to work with members of Congress to reintroduce our priority bills, with the latest being the Invest to Protect Act, the Fighting PTSD Act, and the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program Reauthorization Act.

The **Invest to Protect Act** (S. 768), sponsored by Senators Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV) and Charles Grassley (R-IA), would create a broad grant program through the Department of Justice (DOJ) specifically for small state, local, or tribal law enforcement agencies that will give them resources to train their officers, provide mental health resources for their officers, and retain and hire officers.

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. The Invest to Protect Act will help ensure all law enforcement agencies have access to the support and resources necessary to effectively serve and protect our communities.

The **Fighting PTSD Act** (S. 825), reintroduced by Senators Grassley and Chris Coons (D-DE), would require the Attorney General to propose a program for making treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder and acute stress disorder available to all federal, state, and local public safety officers. The bill acknowledges the prevalence of PTSD within the public safety profession and the need to address PTSD and acute stress disorder among officers to make certain they get the treatment and help they need.

This legislation is an important first step to giving all officers access to confidential, state-of-the-art treatments for PTSD and acute stress disorder. By recognizing the instances of these disorders within the profession and guaranteeing treatments and resources are widely available, we can work to ensure that suicide will no longer be one of the top killers of public safety officers.

The **Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program Reauthorization Act** (H. 1726), reintroduced by Congressman Joe Neguse (D-CA), would reauthorize this important grant 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. Importantly, the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant program ensures the resources and support it provides to state and local law enforcement meets local needs.

NAPO has long supported the Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) which has brought together federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to target violent gang and gun crimes in our communities since its inception in 2001.

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.