



The Washington Report

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

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Don't Hesitate! Register Today for NAPO's 47th Annual Convention

July 20 – 23, 2025
Arizona Biltmore Resort

Join us for NAPO's [47th Annual Convention](#) at the Arizona Biltmore Resort in Phoenix. Participate in setting NAPO's legislative priorities for the 119th Congress. Learn from presentations by prominent law enforcement figures about the latest developments in police policies and services and help determine NAPO's path forward by participating in the election of NAPO's Leadership.

The iconic Arizona Biltmore Resort was built in 1929, is a historic landmark and the only Frank Lloyd Wright influenced resort in the world. The Resort offers stunning views of the Phoenix Mountain Preserve and has everything needed for a perfect week:

7 Spectacular Pools Including Adult Only Pool and Family Pool with 65' Water Slide
2 PGA Golf Courses - Tennis, Pickleball Courts - Trails and Bikes
Tierra Luna Full-Service Spa
Many Upscale Restaurants, Lounges and Pool Bars

Very Special Thanks to Darrell Kriplean and the Phoenix Law Enforcement Association and all our NAPO member associations from Arizona for sponsoring many of the convention's events. Without their financial support and tireless efforts, many of the events simply would not have been possible!

For more information and to register, please visit www.napo.org/convention25

Supreme Court Rules on Use of Force in *Barnes v Felix*

The U.S. Supreme Court issued a decision on May 15, 2025, in *Barnes v Felix* regarding how courts should analyze the use of force by officers. In its decision, the Supreme Court rules that courts must consider the totality of the circumstances, not just the split second when an officer perceives a threat.

The case involves a routine traffic stop during which Harris County (Texas) Officer Roberto Felix, Jr., pulled over Ashtian Barnes for suspected toll violations. Officer Felix asked Barnes for his driver's license

and a tense exchange occurred, which included Officer Felix telling Barnes to stop "digging" in the car and requesting he open the trunk. When Officer Felix ordered Barnes out of the vehicle, Barnes attempted to drive away with the car door still open. Officer Felix put his foot on the driver's side doorsill and ordered Barnes to stop moving multiple times. When Barnes failed to comply, Officer Felix did what any reasonable officer would do to safeguard his own life and that of others and took two shots, killing Barnes. Lower courts ruled that only the final two seconds—when Felix was on the doorsill—mattered, not what led to that moment.

NAPO joined with our member organization, the Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas (CLEAT), in an **amicus brief** affirming the constitutionality of Officer Felix's actions and calling on the Court to clarify that judges may review segments of an event which precede the use of deadly force only for the purpose of determining the officer's knowledge, not to second-guess an officer's prior tactics, actions, or decisions.

Lower courts have been split in how they analyze officer use of force, with some using "the moment of threat", isolated only the brief instance before deadly force was used, and others using the "totality of the circumstances", assessing all events leading up to the use of force. In its ruling in *Barnes v Felix*, the Supreme Court ruled that courts must examine the "totality of the circumstance", the prior actions and decisions of both the officer and the suspect, in determining the reasonableness of force. The Supreme Court did not decide, however, whether an officer's own actions creating a dangerous situation affect the reasonableness of the force used.

With this ruling, the Fifth Circuit's judgement in favor of Officer Felix is vacated and the case is now remanded to be reconsidered under the correct "totality of the circumstances" standard.

NAPO will continue to closely follow this case, and others that impact officers' ability to use force for the protection of themselves and others, and its impact on officers.

President Releases Proposed FY 2026 Budget

On May 30, President Trump released his [proposed budget for fiscal year 2026](#). The budget proposal includes funding requests for NAPO's priority grant programs within the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security (DOJ, DHS).

In general, the budget proposal for DOJ focuses on reducing violent crime, fighting against the fentanyl crisis, and enforcing immigration law. The budget proposes to merge the COPS Program into the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), which oversees the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), Byrne-JAG, the Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) Grant Program, the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program (JMHCPC), and the PSOB Office, amongst other vital law enforcement assistance programs. It also calls for the integration of the Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) and the Office of Tribal Justice (OTJ) into OJP. The purpose is to consolidate all of DOJ's state and local law enforcement assistance programs and bureaus under one office.

The President's budget also requests to merge the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) into the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and transfer the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Program from the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to OJP.

The FY 2026 budget requests \$446 million for the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) Program, with \$87.5 million in carveouts for programs including \$13 million for the VALOR Program and \$40

million for the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program. The budget also proposes \$30 million for the BVP Grant Program, \$37 million for JMHCP, \$110 million in total for the STOP School Violence Grant programs, and provides no funding for the BJA Body Worn Camera Grant Program.

For the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Program, the President's budget proposes \$344.4 million, of which \$180 million is allocated for the COPS Hiring Program with a carve out of \$10 million for the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act (LEMHWA) and the Supporting and Treating Officers in Crisis (STOIC) Act programs. It also provides \$12 million for the POLICE Act program for office active-shooter training. This is nearly \$73 million less than the COPS Program received in Fiscal 2025. The budget proposal makes no mention of the National Blue Alert Network, which is run by the COPS Office, and zeroes out the COPS anti-meth and anti-heroin task force programs as well as the Collaborative Reform Program.

For the important Department of Homeland Security grants, the budget proposal requests \$351 million for the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP) and \$426.5 for the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) and imposes a new 25 percent non-federal cost match on each program.

NAPO has concerns with the proposal to merge the COPS Office into OJP with HIDTA, OVW, and OTJ. The COPS Office is the only office within the Department solely dedicated to the needs of state and local law enforcement. COPS leadership and staff have built close relationships with state and local law enforcement agencies and representatives, and it is known for its accessibility and responsiveness to stakeholders and grantees. It is a trusted office within the DOJ that over the past 30 years has become an essential partner to the law enforcement community.

COPS initiatives to put and maintain more officers in the field promote community policing, fight crime, and improve officer safety and wellness and should be continued and supported as part of an independent COPS Office.

Additionally, NAPO believes that the HIDTA Program is best administered by ONDCP given its unbiased and neutral position. HIDTA is truly an agency-neutral program that serves only to facilitate and coordinate the efforts of federal, state, and local law enforcement.

NAPO sent **a letter to House and Senate appropriations leadership** as well as **a letter to Attorney General Bondi** thanking them for their support of state and local law enforcement assistance programs and reiterating our concerns with the merger of the COPS Office into OJP.

The President's Fiscal 2026 Budget represents the President's fiscal priorities, but it is Congress that decides the final appropriations for Fiscal 2026. NAPO is working with Congress to ensure we secure significant funding levels for all our priority grant programs and safeguard the independence of the COPS Office.

NAPO Supports Inclusion of Tax Priorities in One Big Beautiful Bill

The One, Big, Beautiful Bill Act, which passed the U.S. House of Representatives on May 22nd, includes several NAPO-backed tax provisions: no tax on overtime pay, an increase in the state and local tax (SALT) deduction cap, and an end to *de minimis* treatment for all low-value commercial shipments.

“These provisions impact the financial security of our nation’s law enforcement officers as well as public safety,” stated NAPO President Mick McHale. “The elimination of tax on overtime pay and the increase in the SALT deduction cap provide significant financial relief to the men and women who serve and protect our communities and greatly assist with the recruitment and retention crisis our profession has been facing.”

NAPO sent **a letter** on June 2 to Republican House and Senate leadership urging them to maintain these priorities as they continue to negotiate the final reconciliation package.

Our nation’s law enforcement agencies are understaffed, and officers are being forced to work overtime to ensure our communities are being served. The One, Big Beautiful Bill Act would exclude overtime pay from taxable income for those making less than \$160,000 per year.

“We support the no tax on overtime pay, which has long been a priority for President Trump and NAPO,” said McHale. “We would like to see it expanded in the Senate so that all law enforcement officers, including those in high cost of living jurisdictions, benefit from this much-needed financial support.”

The SALT deduction helped ensure that state and local first responders receive the support they need from the communities they serve, as public safety budgets across the country are largely drawn from state and local property, sales, and income taxes. These investments give our first responders the tools they need to keep our communities safe. Increasing the cap from \$10,000 to \$40,000 for individuals earning less than 500,000 per year is a win for homeowners, our communities, and for the first responders who work every day to keep those communities safe.

Finally, by ending *de minimis* treatment for all low-value commercial shipments, the bill will help stop the flow of fentanyl and illicit narcotics coming across our borders and will safeguard the lives of our children, families, and friends.

Administration Announces New Efforts to Bring Transparency To Prescription Drug & Hospital Prices

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.

The Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Treasury have been working together to implement the Executive Order’s enhanced transparency requirements. These efforts include issuing on May 22 a Request for Information (RFI) on how to require health insurers to publish prescription drug pricing in a machine-readable file format. This would allow consumers, researchers, and developers to easily access detailed information about prescription drug costs, helping to increase price comparison across health plans and improve affordability. Additionally, the Departments announced updated technical guidance for health plans to improve the clarity and usefulness of published cost data.

Additionally, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services issued stricter requirements for hospitals to post actual prices of services and launched its own RFI to enhance compliance and data accuracy.

These actions by the Administration will make healthcare pricing more transparent and easier to understand—starting with hospitals and prescription drugs. Price transparency means providing consumers with clear, easy-to-understand information about the costs of healthcare services before they receive care. This allows individuals to compare prices, plan ahead for out-of-pocket expenses, and potentially save money, just like they would when shopping for other goods or services. These new rules are designed to empower consumers by giving them the information they need to make smarter, more informed decisions about their healthcare.

Something must be done about the rising costs of healthcare and the struggle Americans go through when trying to get affordable care for themselves and their loved ones. NAPO supports these efforts by the Administration to promote more transparency and lower prices in our healthcare system.

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.