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

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NAPO Victory! Senate Votes to Include Pro-Law Enforcement Amendment in FY 2026 NDAA

In an important win for NAPO, the Senate voted on October 9 to include the NAPO-backed amendment sponsored by Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Charles Grassley (R-IA) and Ranking Member Richard Durbin (D-IL) – the Law Enforcement and Crime Victims Support Package (S. Amdt. 3272) – in the Fiscal 2026 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

The amendment is a package of the eight bipartisan bills that were unanimously approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee on May 15 in honor of National Police Week: Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act (S. 237), Improving Police Critical Aid for Responding to Emergencies (CARE) Act (S. 1595), Retired Law Enforcement Officers Continuing Service Act (S. 1563), the Strong Communities Act (S. 1316), the Protecting First Responders from Secondary Exposure Act (S. 180), the Reauthorizing STOIC Act (S. 419), the Chief Herbert D. Proffitt Act (S. 911), and the PROTECT Our Children Reauthorization Act (S. 539).

NAPO worked several strategies to move these important bills forward from their inclusion in the NDAA to passing them as a package on the Senate floor. We are grateful to Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Durbin and the sponsors of the bills that are included in the amendment who worked tirelessly with NAPO to ensure the amendment was incorporated into the NDAA: Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), John Cornyn (R-TX), Josh Hawley (R-MO), Gary Peters (D-MI), and Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV).

We now turn our focus to ensuring the amendment survives the conference negotiations with the House, which passed its version of the NDAA on September 10. NAPO has already met with House Judiciary Committee staff to urge Chairman Jim Jordan (R-OH) to support maintaining the amendment in the final FY 26 NDAA.

NAPO Informs Attorney General Regarding Broken PSOB Program

On October 7, NAPO **reached out to** Attorney General Pam Bondi advising her of our significant concerns with the current state of the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Program. The outreach is in follow up to Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Charles Grassley's [June 24th letter](#) to Attorney

General Bondi asking for information and accountability as to why the program is falling so short of its mission. Both Chairman Grassley's letter and our letter are in response to the September 2024 Government Accountability Office (GAO) damning report on the PSOB Program: [Report to Congress, Public Safety Officers' Benefits \(PSOB\) Program: Transparency, Claims Assistance, and Program Management Improvements Needed](#).

The GAO report lays out much of what is wrong with the PSOB Program and illustrates an inability of the program to recognize the negative impact its incompetence has on claimants.

NAPO has been well-aware of these deficiencies in the PSOB Program for far too long. Over nearly the past 10 years, we worked with Congress to enact four laws to improve the transparency and accountability of the PSOB Program and expand eligibility for PSOB death and disability benefits: Public Safety Officers' Benefits Improvement Act of 2017, Safeguarding America's First Responders Act of 2020, Protecting America's First Responders Act of 2021, and the Public Safety Officer Support Act of 2022. While PSOB has worked to implement the provisions expanding eligibility for benefits, the GAO found that it failed to execute many of the transparency and accountability provisions that were included in these Acts.

PSOB claimants – both officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty and the families of officers who died in the line of duty – continually reach out to NAPO asking for help with their claims that have been dragging on for three or four years, some even up to twelve years with no understanding why PSOB is taking so long to determine their claim. It is unacceptable that these brave men and women and their families are being treated in such an abhorrent manner.

There must be transparency and accountability in the PSOB Program to make certain that it is being implemented as Congress intended – to unequivocally honor and support officers and their families who have sacrificed so much in service to their communities.

The PSOB Program is a vital lifeline for officers and families who have just experienced a horrible tragedy. The much-needed death, disability, and education benefits provided by the Program must be safeguarded. NAPO is urging the Attorney General to work with us to improve the PSOB Program and ensure that the survivors of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty and officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty are provided every available resource and benefit in a timely and transparent manner.

NAPO Meets with Head of DOJ Civil Rights Division

On October 8, NAPO Executive Board member and President of the Portland Police Association (a NAPO member group) Sgt. Aaron Schmutz met with Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Harmeet Dhillon along with NAPO Director of Governmental Affairs Andy Edmiston, to discuss the situation in Portland, Oregon. The Portland Police Bureau remains under an Obama-era consent decree, which dictates much of how officers respond to protests, demonstrations, and riots in the field. With the President signaling he is going to call up the National Guard to deploy to Portland to protect Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the city from Antifa, the need for local and federal partners to be on the same page is more important than ever.

The Portland Police Bureau is significantly understaffed and under-resourced and the officers do not have the backing of their elected officials. Sgt. Schmutz stated that he wants to work collaboratively with

federal law enforcement on how best to solve the city's crime issue. The officers he represents need help, support, and resources to effectively do their jobs and they do not have that right now, which is where the federal government comes in. Sgt. Schmautz and NAPO drove home the point that the men and women serving as officers did not institute the consent decree, nor do they set the policies of the Police Bureau and city which is controlled by the city council, mayor, and police chief. Nonetheless, it is the rank-and-file officers who bear the burden of patrolling a violent cityscape threatened by nihilist anarchists.

NAPO stands with the PPA and the men and women who serve as officers with the Portland Police Bureau, who continue to bravely serve their communities in a difficult environment.

Federal Government Remains under Partial Shutdown

The federal government has been under a partial shutdown since the end of the 2025 fiscal year on October 1, as Congress has been unable to come to an agreement to fund the federal government for Fiscal 2026. The House passed a clean spending measure to fund the government at Fiscal 2025 levels through November 21, but it has stalled in the Senate as it needs 60 votes to pass. As this short-term funding effort has been largely Republican led, Democrats are refusing to vote for the continuing resolution unless the Affordable Care Act (ACA) enhanced premiums, which are set to expire at the end of the year, are extended as part of the funding bill.

Congress at a stalemate, with both sides dug into their positions and neither willing to compromise. Speaker Johnson adjourned the House until the Senate finally passes a funding bill, the Senate has voted unsuccessfully on the continuing resolution every day since the shutdown, and many Congressional staff have been furloughed, resulting in no meaningful work happening in Congress.

During the government shutdown, federal law enforcement officers, who are working to protect our cities and communities from violent crime, drugs, and guns, are putting their lives on the line without getting paid. Federal funding for task forces has stopped flowing. Federal grants, resources, and support for state and local law enforcement have stopped, leaving vital public safety initiatives in the lurch.

NAPO [called on Congress](#) to come together, pass a spending bill, and avoid a shutdown, to no avail. We continue to work with Congressional appropriators during the shutdown to protect the independence of the COPS Office and ensure our priority grant programs are sufficiently funded in FY 2026.

NAPO Priority National Police Week Bill Package Stymied Once Again in Senate

On October 3, Senator Eric Schmitt (R-MO) attempted to pass a package comprised of five bipartisan bills that were unanimously approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee on May 15, in honor of National Police Week: the Retired Law Enforcement Officers Continuing Service Act (S. 1563), the Strong Communities Act (S. 1316), the Protecting First Responders from Secondary Exposure Act (S. 180), the Reauthorizing STOIC Act (S. 419), and the PROTECT Our Children Reauthorization Act (S. 539).

Senator Schmitt went to the Senate floor and called for the bills to be unanimously agreed to and passed, speaking passionately on the need to deliver America's law enforcement the funding and resources provided by these bills. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) once again stood up to forcefully object to the

passage of the bills despite having voted to approve them in Committee. The first time he stopped the unanimous consent of passage of these bills was back in July when Senators Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Charles Grassley (R-IA) attempted to pass these important bills.

Senator Booker's objection remains the Trump Administration's policy to prohibit "sanctuary" jurisdictions from receiving federal funding and, according to the Senator, if those jurisdictions cannot receive the funding, then no jurisdiction should receive the funding.

NAPO believes that law enforcement officers should not be punished for the policies and laws passed by elected officials, and we are working with the Department of Justice to ensure that agencies continue to have access to vital grant programs and initiatives. At the moment, for DOJ grants, a jurisdiction's "sanctuary" policies are only a preference for grantees, meaning that those who cooperate with ICE and federal immigration efforts will be prioritized for grant funding. The Biden Administration had preferences in place for agencies that were accredited and had in place certain police reform policies. This is not a prohibition from being eligible for grant funding, but we are working to ensure no such prohibition is put in place for vital law enforcement and public safety grant programs.

UPDATE: NAPO successfully worked to include the above bills as part of an amendment sponsored by Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Charles Grassley (R-IA) and Ranking Member Richard Durbin (D-IL) – the Law Enforcement and Crime Victims Support Package (S. Amdt. 3272) – that was inserted into the Senate's Fiscal 2026 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

NAPO on the Hill: Comprehensive Crime Package

NAPO met with the House Judiciary Committee majority staff to discuss a possible crime bill that the Administration has been pushing for to address major crime in our nation's cities and communities and our policy priorities to be included in that legislative package. Our focus is on officer protections and safeguards, which are vital to effective public safety, and we are pushing for the consideration of the following issues:

The Protect & Serve Act or provisions that would increase penalties for violent crimes against officers. 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.

The LEOSA Reform Act. This bill would ensure the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act (LEOSA) is more fairly and broadly implemented and would reform qualifications standards to alleviate undue burdens for those carrying under LEOSA. We view this as both an officer safety and a public safety issue.

Additional funding for NAPO priority grant programs. Specifically, at a time when state and local law enforcement agencies are understaffed and under-resourced, fully funding the COPS Hiring Program, Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act, Project Safety Neighborhoods, Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program, Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program (JMHCP), amongst other vital initiatives, will go a long way to assisting law enforcement respond to and reduce crime in their communities.

The Qualified Immunity Act. Qualified immunity is an important protection for the men and women in law enforcement who put their lives on the line each day to protect our communities. Without it, officers will hesitate or be paralyzed in fear of civil liability for allegedly violating an unknown (and unknowable) civil right. By codifying the Supreme Court’s doctrine of qualified immunity, the Qualified Immunity Act will ensure that actual violations of known rights are addressed, while those officers who perform their duties reasonably are shielded from baseless lawsuits.

The Law Enforcement Officer Bill of Rights. NAPO recognizes that there is a serious need for the implementation of standards and procedures to guide both state and local law enforcement agencies and law enforcement officers during internal investigations, administrative hearings, and evaluation of citizen complaints. Too often law enforcement officers are subjected to the whim of their departments or local politics during internal investigations and administrative hearings. An Officer Bill of Rights will protect officer due process and improve transparency and accountability in law enforcement agencies.

Public Safety Free Speech Act. This bill would guarantee that public safety officers will not be disciplined for making oral or written statements while off-duty about their personal opinions on job-related issues, including, but not limited to staffing, wages, and working conditions, as well as political and religious opinions.

Law Enforcement Solidarity Act. This bill conditions federal grants on whether a state and locality allows local law enforcement to cooperate with federal law enforcement, including those of the Department of Homeland Security. It goes beyond just immigration policy and “sanctuary cities”. It protects the right and duty of state and local law enforcement officers to provide support to their federal partners in emergency circumstances.

In addition to more resources and support, officers’ rights and wellbeing are of the utmost importance in ensuring their ability to do their jobs effectively and meet the needs of their communities. Any comprehensive crime bill must look at all aspects of the job and public safety and ensure that those who are out on the streets serving as law enforcement officers are sufficiently supported in doing their jobs.

FCC Proposes New Rules Aimed at Fighting Illegal Cell Phones in Prisons

On September 30, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) proposed [new rules](#) to enable local and state correctional facilities to jam signals from illegal contraband cellphones. Currently, jamming devices are not allowed in non-federal prisons and have been banned by the FCC for nearly 90 years.

Thousands of contraband cellphones have poured into prisons across the country and inmates routinely use smuggled phones to coordinate criminal enterprises, intimidate witnesses, and orchestrate violence both inside and outside prison walls. It has become a significant public safety issue for state and local correctional and law enforcement officials. The FCC’s Notice of Proposed Rulemaking seeks to facilitate cooperation between state and local corrections departments and wireless carriers to implement targeted jamming solutions that do not impact the wireless devices of Americans who live, work, and travel near prison facilities.

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.