



The Washington Report

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

September 18, 2026

NAPO Joins National Law Enforcement Partners in Issuing Principles for Responsible Use of ALPR Technology

NAPO joined with the Association of State Criminal Investigative Agencies (ASCIA), International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), Major County Sheriffs of America (MCSA), National Alliance of State Drug Enforcement Agencies (NASDEA), National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives (NAWLEE), National District Attorneys Association (NDAA), National Fusion Center Association (NFCA), National High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) Directors Association (NHDA), National Narcotic Officers' Associations' Coalition (NNOAC), National Real Time Crime Center Association (NRTCCA), National Sheriffs' Association (NSA), and Small and Rural Law Enforcement Executives Association (SRLEEA), in releasing model principles to support clear, enforceable policies governing law enforcement's use of automated license plate recognition (ALPR) technology.

For more than 20 years, ALPR technology and data have been critical tools for protecting the public. We recognize the recent concerns communities and policymakers have raised about law enforcement's use of this technology, and we believe those concerns deserve clear answers and strong safeguards. The principles issued by this coalition of leading national law enforcement organizations provide a framework for clear, enforceable policies with strong safeguards, transparency, meaningful accountability, and consequences for misuse.

We are committed to working with policymakers and communities to protect against misuse while preserving a critical public safety capability that helps protect communities and save lives.

View the ALPR Principles [here](#).

Congress Passes Prison Staff Safety Enhancement Act

In a victory for NAPO, Congress passed the Prison Staff Safety Enhancement Act (S. 307), sponsored by Senators Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) and Jon Ossoff (D-GA), and sent it to the President to be signed into law. This bill will address the increasingly pervasive issues of sexual harassment and sexual assault of federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) staff by federal inmates.

In 2023, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) of the Department of Justice released a report titled Evaluation of the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Efforts to Address Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

Committed by Inmates Toward Staff, which found that 40 percent of the 7,000 BOP employees surveyed stated that they had been sexually harassed or assaulted by an inmate. The report includes several recommendations for the BOP to mitigate inmate-on-staff sexual harassment and assault and to fully ascertain the scope of the problem across the multitude of BOP institutions.

The Prison Safety Enhancement Act would require the BOP to fully implement the recommendations of the 2023 OIG report, require the OIG to analyze punishments for sexual harassment and sexual assault in BOP facilities, and mandate that the Attorney General develop national standards for the prevention, reduction, and punishment of such sexual crimes against BOP staff by inmates.

Importantly, the national standards the Attorney General is required to develop would be beneficial for state and local corrections institutions to emulate to protect their officers from such crimes. NAPO will stay engaged as the national standards are developed to ensure that strong protections are put in place for correctional officers that can translate to the state and local levels.

House Passes Combatting Illicit Xylazine Act

In another win for NAPO, the House passed the Combating Illicit Xylazine Act (H.R. 1266), sponsored by Congressman Jimmy Panetta (D-CA), by voice vote.

Xylazine, a common pharmaceutical drug used in veterinary care, is increasingly contributing to the opioid crisis that plagues our nation's communities. A drug that is meant for sedation and anesthesia in horses and cows has followed the trend of fentanyl and is being used as an additive to illicit drugs. Xylazine is now found in more than a third of all fentanyl powder tested by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) – up from 12 percent in 2021 to over 37 percent at the end of 2024.

This drug has serious and deadly consequences, and there is currently no approved drug to reverse its effects in humans. The Combating Illicit Xylazine Act would classify xylazine as a Schedule III drug, impose penalties on those who choose to use and distribute it illegally, and give law enforcement the tools necessary to fight the spread of this deadly poison in our communities. We are urging the Senate to take up and pass the bill as soon as possible.

DOJ Holds Law Enforcement Quarterly Meeting

NAPO joined Associate Attorney General Stanley Woodward and the acting leadership of the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), the Office of Violence Against Women (OVW), and the leaders of national law enforcement organizations at the Department of Justice's (DOJ) law enforcement stakeholder quarterly meeting on September 17.

During the meeting, leadership addressed the status of the consolidation of the COPS Office, OJP, and OVW into the new Bureau of Justice Grants and the delay in releasing the fiscal year 2025 and 2026 grant solicitations. Although the COPS Office and OVW have not yet been consolidated into OJP, the Department has streamlined the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) process, created a single sign-in process for all grants, and reduced component overhead costs. While we appreciate the streamlining of the grant application process, NAPO remains concerned with the consolidation and the loss of an independent COPS Office.

The delay in releasing the FY 2025 and 2026 NOFOs is due to the Department's additional scrutiny of every grant program and NOFO to ensure that they all align with the Administration's policies. All grants and NOFOs had to be carefully reviewed by the Associate Attorney General's staff before they could be released.

We also discussed the Administration's support for the use of ALPR technology and the Associate Attorney General promised to work closely with us and support our efforts to safeguard this important investigative tool for law enforcement. We shared with him the joint **Law Enforcement ALPR Principles**.

The group discussed the increased violence against officers and Associate Attorney General Woodward asked that we flag violent attacks and shootings of officers to the local United States Attorneys offices to ensure that federal charges are brought where appropriate. NAPO has consistently urged the DOJ over the past several administrations to use the tools they have to prosecute violence against officers and we are grateful this Department is heeding our call to action.

NAPO brought up the Monitor Accountability Act and the actions the Department could take independently of the legislation to place limitations on federal monitors as part of the Administration's larger crackdown on consent decrees. We also urged the Department to request more funding for the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act as part of the President's Fiscal 2027 budget request. Lastly, we asked for an update on the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Program and the Department's efforts to clear the backlog of cases and improve transparency.

The PSOB Office, under the direction of the BJA, has worked to clear much of the death benefits case backlog and will be turning to addressing the more complex disability claim backlog. Associate Attorney General Woodward asked for our support for their efforts to get more resources for PSOB, particularly additional staff to help them more efficiently handle the caseload.

NAPO appreciates the opportunity to participate in this meeting and looks forward to participating in the next quarterly meeting and continuing to strengthen our relationship with the DOJ.

NAPO Participates in FBI's Law Enforcement Partner Engagement Council Meeting

On September 1, NAPO Executive Director Bill Johnson participated in the Law Enforcement Partner Engagement Council (LEPEC) Meeting, convened by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and headed by FBI Director Kash Patel. NAPO is one of only two rank-and-file organizations participating in the Council, with the rest of the participants being chiefs, sheriffs, and administrators.

This meeting focused on information sharing between the FBI and state and local law enforcement. It included presentations by the FBI Criminal Division and the Directorate of Intelligence on money laundering and asset recovery and the usage and challenges of emerging technology.

NAPO appreciates the opportunity to participate in these meetings to strengthen state and local law enforcement's relationship with the FBI.

House Passes Bill to Fight Elder Financial Fraud

The House passed the NAPO-backed Guarding Unprotected Aging Retirees from Deception (GUARD) Act (H.R. 2978), a bipartisan bill introduced by Representatives Zach Nunn (R-IA), Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ), and Scott Fitzgerald (R-WI), by a vote of 414-7.

The GUARD Act directly addresses one of the fastest-growing threats facing American seniors: sophisticated financial fraud, in which criminals build false trust with victims — often retirees — before convincing them to invest in fraudulent schemes. These scams are increasingly carried out through digital channels and cryptocurrency platforms, making them exceptionally difficult for law enforcement to investigate and prosecute under current resource constraints.

Specifically, the GUARD Act would allow state and local law enforcement agencies to use eligible federal grant funding to investigate financial fraud and scams targeting older Americans and authorize federal law enforcement to assist state and local agencies with blockchain tracing tools.

Law enforcement's duty is to serve and to protect our communities from all crime, including cybercrime. The rate of cybercrime, particularly financial scams, has jumped significantly and law enforcement needs every tool available to help identify cybercriminals and protect victims. The GUARD Act will help departments across the nation better prevent, investigate, and prosecute these crimes.

NAPO Supports Bill to Improve Officer Access to Culturally Competent Mental Health Care

NAPO has pledged our support for the Emergency Responders Mental Health Training (EMT) Act (H.R. 10349), introduced by Representatives Derek Tran (D-CA), John Rutherford (R-FL), Don Davis (D-NC), and Mike Lawler (R-NY).

State and local law enforcement officers are our nation's first responders. They respond to our country's greatest tragedies as well as violent and abhorrent crimes that unfortunately occur with some frequency in our neighborhoods. They do not have the luxury of turning away; they have to respond to the situation and take responsibility for it. This is what passes for "normal" in their work world. The work that officers do each day and the environments in which they are placed take a huge toll on the human mind, body, and soul.

Many of our officers suffer from PTSD and acute stress disorders, but they are reluctant to seek help, especially through services offered by their agencies. They worry about confidentiality, fear that admitting their need for help will jeopardize their employment or believe that the available mental health specialists will not understand what they are going through or what they have experienced.

The EMT Act will help ensure that officers have access to culturally competent mental health and wellness services by establishing a post-graduate fellowship pilot program to increase the number and quality of mental health professionals trained specifically to address mental health and substance use disorders for emergency responders.

NAPO thanks Representatives Tran, Rutherford, Davis, and Lawler for their leadership and support for safeguarding the mental health and wellness of our nation's law enforcement officers.

National Blue Alert Advisory Committee Meets

The Blue Alert Advisory Committee, of which NAPO is an original member, in conjunction with the Justice Department's Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office, convened on September 10 to discuss the Network's continued work to establish Blue Alert systems in all 50 states. The COPS Acting Director Cory Randolph led the meeting.

Currently, eleven states and Washington, D.C. do not have Blue Alert networks. Getting Blue Alert plans up and running in all 50 states is a priority for NAPO as it ensures the National Blue Alert Network we fought so hard to get enacted as part of the Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu National Blue Alert Act works efficiently and effectively to protect officers from harm. The Act is named after two NYPD officers who were members of NAPO through the PBA of NYC.

The states that currently do not have active Blue Alert Networks are Alaska, Arkansas, Hawaii, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. Legislation to create a Blue Alert plan is pending in Massachusetts, with NAPO member organization, the Massachusetts Coalition of Police, leading the push for the bill.

During the meeting, the Advisory Committee discussed the Blue Alerts issued since the Advisory Committee last met in April and the latest data on officers shot in the line of duty. Seven Blue Alerts were issued over the past four months in Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, and South Carolina that all resulted in the successful capture of the assailants.

As of September 10, 227 officers have been shot in the line of duty this year, 22 of whom were killed. 41 of the officers who were shot were ambushed. Officers continue to face an increasingly dangerous environment as they work to serve and protect our communities, making the National Blue Alert Network a vital officer safety tool.

NAPO, together with the COPS Office, stands ready to work with stakeholders in these remaining states to help enact such legislation. If you are interested in receiving information and resources on how to establish a Blue Alert plan or wish to participate in the state-level working group, please contact the NAPO Office at (703) 549-0775 or info@napo.org.

Best practices and other Blue Alert resources collected from around the nation, including examples of legislation, policies, forms, and a directory of state Blue Alert officials, can be found on the [National Blue Alert Network website](#). A short [introductory video](#) about the National Blue Alert System from the COPS Office can also be found on the website.

House Adjourns Again for Recess through the Elections

The House adjourned on September 16 after just three days of work to allow lawmakers to return to their districts to campaign through the November elections. With Congress passing a continuing resolution to fund the government through December 11 at the end of August, there was no immediate, must-pass legislation to keep them in town prior to the elections. The Senate is scheduled to remain in session through October 2 to confirm as many of the President's nominees as possible.

During its three-day work period, the House passed numerous bills under suspension of the rules, including the NAPO-backed Combatting Illicit Xylazine Act and the GUARD Act, and took up bills to curb the financial impact of data centers on communities and impose financial sanctions on Russia.

NAPO **urged House leadership** to take up the Officer John Barnes and Chief Michael Ansbro PSOB Expansion Act, which passed the Senate by voice vote in August, this past week under suspension of the rules in honor of the 25th anniversary of 9/11. Passage of this important bill would show that Congress recognizes how 9/11 is still impacting the lives of the officers who responded to the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and Shanksville that day. It would go a long way towards honoring their service and sacrifice and ensure 9/11 responders and their families are awarded the benefits they deserve.

House leadership would not commit to move the bill without the support of House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jim Jordan (R-OH), who ultimately did not support quick passage of the bill and stymied our efforts. We continue our efforts to move this priority bill as part of the Fiscal 2027 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) and are working to win over Chairman Jordan, who must sign off on its inclusion.

Congress will return after the election to a busy lame duck schedule, including funding the federal government for the remainder of the fiscal year, the NDAA, and reauthorizing Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA). Importantly for NAPO, the Senate must also take up and pass the reauthorization of the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet), which expires in February 2027.

Join Us for NAPO's Annual Pension & Benefits Seminar

**February 7 – 9, 2027
Caesar's Palace Hotel, Las Vegas**

Please join the National Association of Police Organizations at our **38th Annual Police, Fire, EMS, & Municipal Employee Pension & Benefits Seminar, February 7 –9 , 2027**, at Caesars Palace Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada.

NAPO's Annual Pension & Benefits Seminar educates pension system and employee representatives, along with their providers and vendors, about the latest issues affecting the pension and benefits industry. Topics will include:

- Results and Effects of the Midterm Congressional Elections on Federal Policy
- Effects of Mid-East Conflicts on Markets and Economic Uncertainty
- Growing use of AI, Benefits and Risks
- Mounting National Debt and Threats to the U.S. Credit Rating
- Liability Pitfalls & Practical Advice for Fiduciaries
- “Outside the Box” Benefits as a Component of Recruitment & Retention

We will examine these areas and more as we evaluate the effect of these trends on public employment benefits and security, and the near- and mid-term future for U.S. and world economic conditions.

Take an active role in improving the future of your fund by registering today. You will find information regarding registration and hotel reservations on NAPO's website: www.NAPO.org/PB27

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 or (703) 549-0775.

DOJ Releases Additional FY 26 Law Enforcement Assistance Grant Solicitations

The Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs (OJP) released the Notices of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) for several NAPO-priority grant programs:

[FY 2026 Body-Worn Camera Policy and Implementation Program to Support Law Enforcement Agencies](#)

This grant program supports state and local law enforcement and correctional agencies purchase or lease body-worn cameras (BWCs) and develop comprehensive BWC programs.

Deadline [Grants.gov](#) 09/25/2026 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time and JustGrants 10/02/2026 08:59 p.m. Eastern Time

[FY 2026 Public Safety and Mental Health Initiative](#)

Specifically, this NOFO provides funding to enhance Crisis Stabilization Centers: 24/7 crisis receiving/drop-off centers with dedicated law enforcement access and protocols, no-refusal policies, and capacity for rapid assessment, stabilization, and civil commitment evaluations for individuals who pose a danger to themselves or others or demonstrate a grave disability.

Deadline [Grants.gov](#) 09/25/2026 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time and JustGrants 10/02/2026 08:59 p.m. Eastern Time

[FY 2026 Crisis Response Training Program](#)

This grant program supports state, local, and tribal governments, law enforcement agencies, correctional facilities, probation and parole departments, and sheriffs' offices in developing, implementing, or expanding crisis response training programs that enhance public safety and officer safety by improving law enforcement responses to individuals in crisis who have behavioral health conditions (including mental health and substance use disorders), intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DDs), physical disabilities, and/or traumatic brain injuries.

Deadline [Grants.gov](#) 10/05/2026 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time and JustGrants 10/13/2026 08:59 p.m. Eastern Time

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.