



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

Representing America's Finest

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October 12, 2023

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The Honorable Jim Jordan
Chair

Committee on the Judiciary

United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
Ranking Member

Committee on the Judiciary

United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Jordan and Ranking Member Nadler,

On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO) and the over 241,000 rank-and-file officers we represent across the country, I am writing to advise you of our concerns with the Rape Kit Backlog Progress Act, H.R. 5721, as approved by the Committee on September 28.

NAPO has long supported additional resources for state and local law enforcement agencies to assist them in ending the DNA backlogs for unsolved crimes, including sexual assaults, analyze DNA samples, and increase the capacity to process DNA samples in order to prevent future backlogs. We recognize the underlying intent of the Rape Kit Backlog Progress Act to track state and local law enforcement agencies' progress on clearing their sexual assault kit backlogs. However, we are very concerned that the bill pursues its goals through penalties to the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) Program - a critical resource for law enforcement.

This legislation has the potential to jeopardize public safety through extreme Byrne JAG penalties. The Byrne JAG Program provides resources for multi-jurisdictional drug and gang task forces, forensic science, information sharing and technology, county jails, prosecutors, drug courts, and juvenile delinquency and drug treatment courts. Losing access to this vital grant funding will challenge law enforcement's mission to keep the public safe as well as undermine the intent of the bill.

NAPO urges you to strongly consider our concerns with this legislation. If you would like to discuss this issue further, please feel free to contact me at (703) 549-0775.

Sincerely,

William J. Johnson

Executive Director