



The Washington Report: Update

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

March 3, 2021

House Set to Pass George Floyd Justice in Policing Act Thursday

The House will vote on the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act (H.R. 1280) tomorrow. It is the exact same bill the House passed on June 25, 2020 – under a closed rule, meaning no amendments are allowed unless they unanimously supported. It is expected that it will pass the House with a party-line vote.

NAPO is disappointed that House Democrats are moving forward with a vote on this bill without even a conversation about our significant concerns with it. The most concerning aspects of the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act are the practical elimination of qualified immunity, the change of the *Graham v Connor* legal standard of “objective reasonableness” for the use of force to “only when necessary”, and the clear disdain for officer due process, which runs throughout the bill. These provisions are incredibly concerning taken together as they remove any legal protections for officers while making it easier to prosecute them for mistakes on the job, not just criminal acts.

While there are a few of the areas in the legislation where we have strong opposition, there are others where we agree on the intention and goal. It is by gaining the buy-in of the law enforcement community that any reforms will enjoy greater implementation and execution by agencies across the country.

However, Democrats continue to ignore the needs and concerns of the law enforcement community in pushing police reform. NAPO sent [a letter to House leadership](#) and members of Congress opposing the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act and asking that law enforcement have a seat at the table to develop police reform policies that will improve policing practices, particularly regarding ensuring greater transparency, accountability, and training in law enforcement.

We have not stood by and opposed any and all efforts to make policing better. We worked closely with Senator Tim Scott (R-SC) on the JUSTICE Act, which addresses many of the same issues as the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act. The biggest difference is that in the drafting of the JUSTICE Act, the law enforcement community was included at the table. The JUSTICE Act largely takes into account our concerns around ensuring officer due process, protecting qualified immunity for officers, supporting the [National Consensus Policy on Use of Force](#) which NAPO helped author, and guarding officer privacy and confidentiality rights.

Senate leadership has not indicated when it will take up the House-passed Justice in Policing Act, which does not have enough support to overcome a filibuster as it is currently written. We will keep our members up to date on the status of this bill and police reform.