



The Washington Report

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Representing America's Finest

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NAPO WASHINGTON REPORT FLASH

NAPO Meets with Senator Franken's Staff to Discuss the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act

As has been noted in previous Washington Reports, NAPO is a strong supporter of the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program (JMHCPC), which helps criminal justice and mental health agencies work collaboratively towards better outcomes. The JMHCPC can help law enforcement agencies across the United States in their responsibilities in assisting those, and dealing with citizens with mental health issues.

On June 20, 2013, the Senate Judiciary Committee approved the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act (JMHCAC) of 2013 with overwhelming bipartisan support. The bipartisan legislation, introduced by Senator Al Franken (D-MN) and Congressman Richard Nugent (R-FL) in late January 2013, built upon the successes of the Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act (MIOTCRA), and supports law enforcement training; veterans treatment courts; resources for corrections systems; and other collaborative approaches to improve responses to people with mental illnesses in the criminal justice system.

Shortly after the Senate Judiciary Committee advanced the JMHCAC, Senators Tom Coburn (R-OK) and Mike Lee (R-UT) placed holds on the legislation. Over the past several months, NAPO has worked with other stakeholders to urge Senators Lee and Coburn to release their holds so that the bill can proceed through the legislative process. NAPO has communicated with Senators Lee and Coburn and has been an active participant in JMHCAC working groups to strategize ways forward on the legislation.

On September 24th, NAPO joined fellow stakeholders in a meeting with Senator Franken's senior staff to discuss the status of the bill and efforts to move the legislation forward in the Senate. NAPO plans to work with members of the JMHCAC Working Group and our member groups to garner additional co-sponsors for the legislation to ensure the holds are lifted and the legislation passes the Senate.

If you have any questions about this legislation, please contact Melissa Nee at: mnee@napo.org.

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