



The Washington Report

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

April 12, 2024

Don't Forget! TOP COPS Law Enforcement Sponsorship Deadline April 16

We hope you will help us this year in honoring *America's Finest* at the Thirty-first Annual TOP COPS Awards®, which will take place on Sunday, May 12. We will be presenting the TOP COP Awards® at a Reception and Dinner at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C.

To support our efforts in producing a deserving tribute, we are asking all NAPO members to please consider becoming a Law Enforcement Organization Sponsor. We are offering several sponsorship levels, which are listed on the attached form.

To support this year's TOP COPS Awards® please return the attached sponsorship form to NAPO by April 16, 2024.

We hope you will be able to join us in Washington, D.C. to honor these outstanding men and women. As always, please don't hesitate to contact either one of us or NAPO's Director of Events, Elizabeth Loranger, at (800) 322-6276 or eloranger@napo.org with any questions or concerns. We look forward to seeing you in May!

NAPO on the Hill: Social Security Fairness Act

NAPO joined the sponsor of the Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82), Representative Garret Graves (R-LA), and coalition partners in a meeting on April 9 to discuss the status of the bill, immediate next steps, and a plan to move this important bill forward. The Social Security Fairness Act would repeal both the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and restore the retirement security of millions of public servants.

The House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security is holding a second hearing on the WEP and Government Pension Offset GPO on April 16. The hearing will focus on the policy of repealing the two provisions, how the repeal will impact the Social Security Trust Fund, and the best way to address the inequity of the GPO and WEP.

Many of our members submitted statements for the record for the field hearing back in November, which contributed to the highest number of submitted comments in Committee history. We are asking you to please resubmit your previous statement for the record again to drive the point home that the GPO and WEP are detrimental to the retirement security of millions of public sector retirees. If you did not previously submit a letter or a written statement, please consider doing so for this hearing. The Committee needs to hear from you if you or a family member are impacted by the GPO and WEP.

The Committee is accepting comments through close of business Tuesday, April 30. Please support our efforts by submitting comments now to WMSubmission@mail.house.gov with the subject line “Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset.” You must submit your comments as a Word document attached to the email and be sure to include a list of all persons and/or organizations who are submitting the comments in the Word document. Your email must include your name, organization (if applicable), address, and telephone number. Please copy NAPO’s Governmental Affairs Director, Andy Edmiston, at aedmiston@napo.org when submitting your comments.

NAPO will be including all previously submitted comments as part of President Mick McHale’s written testimony for the hearing on the 16th.

H.R. 82 currently has 313 bipartisan cosponsors, surpassing the 305 cosponsors the bill had at the end of last Congress. We are also doing outreach in the Senate to build support for the Senate version of the Social Security Fairness Act, S. 597, sponsored by Senators Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Susan Collins (R-ME). S. 597 currently has 53 cosponsors, the highest number of cosponsors the bill has had in years. Our goal is to get the bill to 60 cosponsors, which is the number needed to overcome a filibuster in the Senate.

NAPO continues to work to get the remaining holdouts who have not yet signed on to the bill and to educate Ways and Means Committee members on the GPO and WEP.

Please see our “[Sponsor/Cosponsor](#)” [spreadsheet](#) to see if your Representative is a cosponsor. Contact NAPO’s Director of Governmental Affairs, Andy Edmiston, at aedmiston@napo.org or 703-549-0775 for more information on the Social Security Fairness Act and materials you can share with your Representative if they are not yet a cosponsor.

NAPO Fights to Maintain Law Enforcement Access to Critical Investigative Data

Despite almost nine months of NAPO and the national law enforcement community expressing our strong opposition to the Fourth Amendment is Not For Sale Act (H.R. 4639), the House is considering bringing it to the floor for a vote.

Our key concerns with the Fourth Amendment is Not For Sale Act (FANFSA) are:

- This bill would make it harder for local, state, and federal law enforcement to investigate crime.
- The bill was drafted without consulting law enforcement experts whose work would be directly impacted.
- Imposing a probable cause requirement when the Constitution does not compel it will prevent law enforcement from identifying and pursuing irreplaceable investigative leads.
- The data this bill would restrict is most useful after a crime occurs but before solid leads have been developed and probable cause can be demonstrated.

- The information this bill restricts serves as the building blocks of probable cause, which are then used to obtain a warrant where appropriate as an investigation progresses.
- This bill would delay or prevent law enforcement's ability to aid victims, solve crimes, illuminate and investigate drug trafficking networks, and intervene during overt threats of mass violence.

On April 9, the House unanimously approved legislation to reauthorize the Missing Children's Assistance Act, which makes critical updates to help the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) better respond to crimes affecting children, support youth who are missing, and prevent child sexual exploitation. That reauthorization is all for naught if FANFSA is passed. FANFSA would take away many of the investigative tools law enforcement uses to both find victims and bring child predators to justice.

NAPO reached out to all members of the House reiterating our opposition to the Fourth Amendment Is Not For Sale Act and urging them to reject any attempt to include it as part of FISA reauthorization. As part of our efforts, we shared once again the two joint law enforcement letters NAPO signed on to with Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association (FLEOA), Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA), Major County Sheriffs of America (MCSA), National District Attorneys Association (NDAA), National Fusion Center Association (NFCA), National Narcotic Officers' Associations' Coalition (NNOAC), and the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) expressing our serious concerns with the Fourth Amendment Is Not For Sale Act. One letter is from [July 18, 2023](#) and the other from [December 6, 2023](#).

Publicly available data helps law enforcement focus its investigative resources on the most dangerous criminals. It helps rule out suspects, find exculpatory evidence, and ensures that law enforcement focuses its resources and authorities on those who committed crimes. Preventing law enforcement from being able to access it efficiently will make communities less safe. A vote in favor of FANFSA is a vote against public safety.

Senate Judiciary Holds COPS Program Oversight Hearing

The Senate Judiciary Committee held an oversight hearing of the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Program on April 10, with COPS Director Hugh Clements as the sole witness. The COPS Program is a priority for NAPO, and we coordinated with the Committee staff on the hearing and submitted [**a letter**](#) in support of the program for the hearing record.

Since its inception in 1994, the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Program has assisted over 13,000 law enforcement agencies with over \$20 billion in funding to hire more than 136,000 community police officers across the United States. This funding has contributed to continued successes in improving law enforcement and community relations; combating crime, drugs, and gangs in our communities; and addressing emerging law enforcement needs, including officer mental health and wellness.

In recent years, Congress has passed legislation to enhance the ability of the COPS Program to support state and local law enforcement. Many of these measures were sponsored by Members of the Committee, such as the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act and the Supporting and Treating Officers in Crisis Act, the National Blue Alert Network, expanded access to active shooter training through the POLICE Act, and activities authorized by the Law Enforcement De-Escalation Training Act. These programs are vital to state and local law enforcement's ability to serve and protect our communities efficiently and effectively.

The Committee is scheduled to markup the COPS Reauthorization Act (S. 1306), sponsored by Senator Amy Klobuchar on April 18. The Committee has attempted to markup this bill several times over the past couple of months but keeps postponing it as there have been attempts by some Democrats on the Committee to

amend the bill to insert police reform provisions. Senator Klobuchar continues to be a strong advocate for a clean reauthorization of the COPS Program, and we are working with her to get this important bill through committee.

NAPO is committed to ensuring that the COPS Program is supported and fully funded, particularly as we work to expand COPS funding usage to better address state and local recruitment and retention needs.

NAPO on the Hill: National Police Week Priorities

NAPO, together with our national law enforcement coalition – Association of State Criminal Investigative Agencies (ASCIA); Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association (FLEOA); Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA); Major County Sheriffs of America (MCSA); National District Attorneys Association (NDAA); National Narcotics Officers Associations' Coalition (NNOAC); and National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) – continues to push our National Police Week agenda with Congressional leadership. We met the staff of House Majority Leader Steve Scalise (R-LA) as well as Republican Members of the House Judiciary Committee, including Representatives Wesley Hunt (R-TX), Chip Roy (R-TX), Kelly Armstrong (R-ND), Ben Cline (R-VA), Dan Bishop (R-NC), Russell Fry (R-SC), Jeff Van Drew (R-NJ), Darrell Issa (R-CA), and Tom Tiffany (R-WI). In these meetings we pressed our pro-law enforcement legislative agenda for National Police Week.

We discussed the need for legislation to enhance officer safety by increasing penalties for the murder, attempted murder, or assault of federal, state, and local law enforcement officers, the LEOSA Reform Act, legislation aiding state and local agencies to hire and retain qualified officers, a bill to cover exposure-related cancers under the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Program, and legislation to provide public safety officers with access to affordable homeownership.

While we are being promised that pro-law enforcement legislation will move through the House and Senate during Police Week, we have so far received no commitments to moving any of our listed priority legislation. We will continue to press the case that Congress must act in a significant manner to support our nation's law enforcement.

Register Today for NAPO's Annual Lobby Day & Legislative Awards Luncheon

Don't miss the opportunity to join NAPO on Tuesday, May 14th for our [Annual Lobby Day & Legislative Awards Luncheon](#) on Capitol Hill. This is a great opportunity to lobby Congressional Representatives and Senators on behalf of your members concerning the issues which affect law enforcement. Prior to lobbying Capitol Hill, plan to attend NAPO's Legislative Breakfast for an update on NAPO's legislative priorities, results to date from the 118th Congress, and to receive handouts to use during your Hill visits.

Please Register [online](#) or complete the attached registration form and return to NAPO at aedmiston@napo.org or eloranger@napo.org by MAY 1, 2024.

We have reserved hotel rooms at a discounted rate at the Omni Shoreham hotel for NAPO members attending the TOP COPS Awards Dinner and the Legislative Awards Luncheon. The Hotel is selling out fast! Please register and make your hotel reservation at your earliest convenience. We ask that you reserve rooms only for those attending the NAPO events. For hotel reservations at the Omni please [click here](#).

If you want assistance setting up your Capitol Hill meetings, let NAPO's Director of Government Affairs, Andy Edmiston, know no later than May 1 at aedmiston@napo.org or (703) 549-0775.

The registration fee of \$150.00 per person includes the Legislative Update Breakfast, handouts for your Congressional visits, and the Legislative Awards Luncheon. **Advanced Registration is required.** Please contact Elizabeth Loranger, NAPO's Director of Events, at (800) 322-6278 or eloranger@napo.org if you have any questions regarding registration or hotel arrangements. May 14th will be here before you know it. Register today!

COPS Hiring Program Grants Now Open for Applications

The 2024 COPS Hiring Program is a competitive grant program designed to provide funds directly to law enforcement agencies to hire new or rehire existing career law enforcement officers to increase their community policing capacity and crime prevention efforts. All local, state, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies that have primary law enforcement authority are eligible to apply. Up to \$156 million is available for this program.

Applications are due by June 12, 2024 at 4:59 PM ET. Please click [here](#) for more information on the 2024 COPS Hiring Program.

NAPO Backs Bill to Deport Illegal Immigrants Who Commit Sexual Assault

NAPO pledged its support for the Protecting Our Communities from Sexual Predators Act (H.R. 7649), introduced by Representative Vern Buchanan (R-FL). This bill would ensure illegal immigrants who are convicted of sexual assault are detained, immediately deported, and permanently barred from re-entering the country. Any person who commits sexual assault should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, including deportation if applicable. Holding those who commit violence accountable will help keep our communities safe.

Representative Buchanan is also the sponsor of the Thin Blue Line Act (H.R. 130), which would increase penalties on those who harm or target for harm public safety officers by making the murder or attempted murder of a local police officer, firefighter, or first responder an aggravating factor in death penalty determinations in federal court. This would be applicable whether they were targeted or murdered on duty, because of the performance of their duty, or because of their status as a public official. The only requirement is that the homicide provide federal jurisdiction.

NAPO thanks Representative Buchanan for his support of the law enforcement community and we look forward to our continued work with him to protect our officers and our communities from violent crimes.

NAPO Participates on De Minimis Panel at NCTO Conference

NAPO's Director of Governmental Affairs, Andy Edmiston, participated in a panel discussion on the de minimis loophole at the National Council of Textile Organizations (NCTO) 20th Anniversary Meeting. She was joined on the panel by James Carroll, former Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (2019-2021), Lori Wallach, Director of Rethink Trade, and NCTO's President and CEO Kim Glas. NAPO appreciates the opportunity to participate in the NCTO Meeting to provide context and

information on the real damage the de minimis provision of U.S. trade law has on our nation's communities, particularly as it relates to the influx of fentanyl, its analogues and precursor chemicals through direct international mail from China.

The de minimis loophole allows packages valued at less than \$800 to enter the U.S. without facing any taxes, fees, or inspection. As a result, this cripples domestic manufacturers and workers, undermines retailers, strains law enforcement resources, and facilitates the free flow of illegal and dangerous products and illicit drugs, particularly fentanyl and its precursors. Closing the de minimis loophole would help staunch the surge of illicit narcotics that are exploiting this exemption to wreak havoc across the country and protect and safeguard the lives of our children, families, and friends. In this moment of crisis, we need to use every weapon we have to curb the unfettered flow of imported fentanyl.

Please monitor NAPO's website, www.napo.org, and Facebook page: National Association of Police Organizations, and follow us on Twitter at NAPOpolice for breaking news and updates.