



The Washington Report

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

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NAPO WASHINGTON REPORT

NAPO Supports the Health Savings Act of 2014

After discussing the Health Savings Act of 2014 (H.R. 4777) with senior staffers for **Congressman Michael Burgess (R-TX)** on June 14, 2014, NAPO pledged our support for the bill. Congressman Burgess introduced the legislation on May 30, 2014. The bill would expand the use of Health Savings Accounts (HSAs), which allow Americans to put aside money for themselves and their children to help mitigate the rising cost of deductibles and out-of-pocket healthcare expenses.

Current law only allows HSAs to be purchased for certain health insurance plans, and contributions are restricted to levels that are often substantially lower than deductibles. The Health Savings Act of 2014 would ensure HSAs may be used more broadly, thereby increasing patient choice in how their healthcare dollars are spent.

In addition to making HSAs more accessible, the bill would allow parents to set up an HSA for their child, while allowing the contributor to claim an after-tax deduction. Further, the bill would raise the contribution limit to match the maximum out-of-pocket limit. Finally, the Health Savings Act would provide bankruptcy protections to HSAs in the same way retirement accounts are currently protected.

NAPO will keep our members updated on the status of this legislation. If you have any questions about this bill, please contact Bill Johnson at: bjohnson@napo.org.

Source:

"U.S. Congressman Michael C. Burgess, M.D. 26th District of Texas." *US Congressman Michael C Burgess RSS*., 30 May 2014. Web. 23 June 2014. <<http://burgess.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=3830>>.

NAPO Expresses Concerns Regarding Limitations on Acquisition of ALPR Technology

On June 17, 2014, NAPO signed-on to a stakeholder group letter to urge the Senate to reject an amendment passed by the House (H. Amt. 815) to the Fiscal Year 2015 Transportation and Housing and Urban Development (THUD) appropriations bill that would prohibit funds from being used to acquire cameras for the purpose of collecting or storing vehicle license plate numbers.

The House amendment, offered by **Representatives John Fleming (R-LA)** and **Mike Capuano (D-MA)**, would prohibit the purchase of Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) technology, which plays an important role in public safety by enhancing productivity, effectiveness, and officer safety. ALPR systems are able to recognize, read, and compare motor vehicle license plates against various “hot lists” much more efficiently than officers manually scanning and making comparisons while on routine patrol.

The stakeholders urged the Senate to reject any attempt to prohibit the acquisition of cameras for the purpose of collecting or storing vehicle license plate numbers. We also urged the Senate to reject in conference the amendment to THUD that was adopted by the House.

The letter is available for your review at the following site:

http://www.napo.org/files/7514/0353/2419/Law_Enforcement_Groups_Letter_to_Senate_THUD_-_ALPR_-_June_2014_1.pdf.

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

NAPO Meeting on Capitol Hill – Congressman King

On June 20, 2014, NAPO participated in a meeting with **Congressman Peter King’s (R-KY)** senior staff to discuss the Second Chance Reauthorization Act of 2013. During the meeting, NAPO highlighted our support of the Second Chance Reauthorization Act of 2013, which improves state and local grant programs to promote successful prisoner reentry and improve public safety. This legislation continues targeted funding for reentry programs at the state and local level that have been proven to reduce recidivism, lead to better outcomes for those released from prison, and save prison costs.

Congressman King’s staff was very receptive to our proposal. We are hopeful that the Congressman will sign-on as a cosponsor of the bill, which currently holds strong bipartisan support in both the House and Senate.

NAPO looks forward to continuing to work with fellow stakeholders to pass this important legislation. If you have any questions about the Second Chance Reauthorization Act, please contact Melissa Nee at: mnee@napo.org.

NAPO Participates in Pension Protection Network Meeting

On June 18, 2014, NAPO participated in a Pension Protection Network meeting. Most pertinent to NAPO, the group discussed the following issues:

- The group continues to monitor movement on the “**Cadillac**” tax. A “Cadillac” insurance plan is a high cost policy. Beginning in 2018, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act imposes a new 40% annual excise tax on taxpayers who are covered by high-cost health insurance plans, including worker and employer contributions to flexible spending or healthcare savings accounts. NAPO has fought against the “Cadillac” health insurance plan tax, as the new tax will negatively impact public safety officers. Legislation to address this issue has not been introduced at this point, but NAPO will continue to work with the stakeholder group on this important topic.
- The group continues to monitor the **Public Employee Pension Transparency Act (PEPTA)**. PEPTA mandates a costly and complex layer of Federal reporting on top of existing state and local accounting and reporting. PEPTA gives Federal regulators sweeping powers to impose duplicative requirements on state and local governments already struggling to comply with existing costly Federal paperwork burdens. Also, PEPTA threatens far-reaching and unintended consequences for the municipal bond market and the economy as a

whole. PEPTA does not protect employee benefits, save costs, or result in more transparency. There has not been significant movement on PEPTA at this point, but NAPO continues to engage members of Congress on this issue.

- The group also discussed **mandatory Social Security**. Like fellow stakeholders, NAPO continues to support a long-term solution to Social Security, as long as such a solution does not mandate that all or some state and local government employees, including newly hired ones and their employing agencies, be required to pay Social Security taxes. Adding presently non-covered public safety workers will not fix the basic problems of Social Security. While it will bring new workers into the Social Security system, the system will also have to assume a liability for these new workers, which will eventually have to be paid. Furthermore, even if Social Security taxes were limited to new hires, the likely consequences of mandatory Social Security taxes, including reduced benefits, lower salaries, or frozen cost-of-living increases, would make law enforcement and fire safety work less financially desirable. NAPO will continue to work with the stakeholder group on this important issue.
- The group also discussed the Internal Revenue Service's plan to address "**normal retirement age**" issues at some point in the near future. The IRS has not submitted written proposals at this point, but we expect to learn more relatively soon. NAPO will report on the proposal as soon as it is made available.

NAPO looks forward to continuing to work with the stakeholder group to address the above issues. If you have any questions about the meeting, please contact Melissa Nee at: mnee@napo.org.

CJS Appropriations Bill - Status Update

NAPO continues to closely monitor the Fiscal Year 2015 Commerce-Justice-Science (CJS) Appropriations bill to ensure our top priorities are fully funded. On June 19, 2014, the Senate suspended debate on the spending bills and **Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV)** pulled the \$126.2 billion spending package from the floor after Republicans and Democrats failed to reach agreement on amendments to the bill.

Several Republicans and Democrats said on the floor that they still want to find a way forward. NAPO will continue to keep our members updated on the status of this bill as we continue to engage members of Congress to ensure our priorities remain at the top of the agenda.

Source:

Hallerman, Tamar. "Grim Outlook for Spending Bills After Senate Suspends 'Minibus' Debate." *CQ.com*. Congressional Quarterly, 19 June 2014. Web. 23 June 2014. <<http://www.cq.com/alertmatch/217407865?14&uid=news-4499341>>.

NAPO Attends Annual NORA Public Safety Sector Council Meeting

NAPO participated in the National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) Public Safety Sector Council meeting on June 17, 2014. The primary focus of the meeting was workplace safety and health issues in the law enforcement subsector. The meeting included an update on accomplishments towards meeting sector research goals, as well as presentations by representatives conducting research studies geared toward the law enforcement community. Discussion topics included: efforts by the National Institute of Justice's Office of Science and Technology to advance scientific research, development, and evaluation to enhance the criminal justice system and increase public safety; studies on the prevalence of cardio-metabolic disease in police officers; group programs to improve safety and health in the law enforcement field; evaluation efforts on a study to implement a motor-vehicle crash prevention program in the

law enforcement community; evaluations of lead and noise exposure at firing ranges; and an analysis of the cardiovascular effects of stress in police.

NAPO appreciated the opportunity to participate in the meeting, and looks forward to reporting on the progress of the studies that were presented.

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

NAPO Supports the Equity in Law Enforcement Act

On June 18, 2014, NAPO sent a letter of support for the Equity in Law Enforcement Act (S.2441), sponsored by **Senator Jack Reed (D-RI)**. (The letter is available at the following link: http://www.napo.org/files/1514/0318/4667/NAPO_Supports_the_Equity_in_Law_Enforcement_Act_3.pdf).

This bill would extend the same Federal benefits to law enforcement officers serving private institutions of higher education that apply to law enforcement officers serving units of State and local government. This legislation would make these individuals eligible for the same benefits provided to public law enforcement officers, including line-of-duty death benefits under the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program and bulletproof vest partnership grants through the Department of Justice. The bill would only apply to officers who are sworn, licensed, or certified to enforce the law within their jurisdiction.

This bill honors the memory of MIT Police Officer Sean Collier, who was murdered on the evening of April 18, 2013 by those responsible for the tragic bombings at the finish line of the Boston Marathon. The change would be retroactive to April 15, 2013 – the day of the bombings. This legislation will ensure that Officer Collier's family and future survivors are protected.

NAPO believes this bill is essential to the law enforcement community, and looks forward to working with Senator Reed and his staff to ensure the passage of this important bill.

If you have any questions about this bill, please contact Bill Johnson at: bjohnson@napo.org.

House Leadership Change

On June 19, 2014, House Republicans chose California **Representative Kevin McCarthy** as their new majority leader. McCarthy defeated Idaho Representative Raul Labrador in a closed-door meeting, where the winner was chosen by secret ballot. Congressman McCarthy will replace Representative Eric Cantor (R-VA), who was unexpectedly defeated in a June 10th primary. Cantor will leave his post as majority leader on July 31st.

Also on June 19th, Republicans elected Louisiana **Representative Steve Scalise** as the House majority whip. Scalise, who was elected in 2008, got a majority of the House Republican Conference's votes on the first ballot, defeating Illinois Representative Peter Roskam and Indiana Representative Marlin Stutzman.

NAPO will keep our members updated on future actions of the new leaders.

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.

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