



# The Washington Report

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

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May 31, 2024

## Register Now for NAPO's 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention

July 14 – 17, 2024 ~ Nashville, TN  
JW Marriott Hotel

Register now and join us for [NAPO's 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention](#)! Participate in setting NAPO's legislative priorities for the 119th Congress and issuing NAPO's endorsements for the Offices of President and Vice President of the United States of America. Learn from presentations by prominent law enforcement figures about the latest developments in police policies and services and help determine NAPO's path forward.

The 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention will be held at the JW Marriott Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee. The JW Marriott, located in the heart of downtown Nashville, is easy walking distance to the city's most famous attractions and landmarks including:

The Ryman Auditorium – home to the original Grand ole Opry  
Country Music Hall of Fame & Museum  
2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Historic District  
The Gulch  
Lower Broadway and the Famous “Honkey-Tonk Highway”

When not exploring Nashville, the hotel offers several bars & restaurants including The Bourbon Sky Restaurant & Lounge, offering stunning views of Nashville's skyline. The hotel also offers a workout center and beautiful rooftop pool with Cabana Bar.

**For more information and to register, please visit [www.napo.org/convention24](http://www.napo.org/convention24).**

## Recruit & Retain Act Signed into Law

President Biden signed the Recruit and Retain Act into law (PL 118-64) on May 24, boosting recruitment opportunities for state and local law enforcement agencies by expanding the Department of Justice's Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Program to help agencies that are both understaffed and struggling to attract new applicants.

Police departments will now be able to use COPS Hiring Program funds to help reduce or pay for application-related fees, such as background checks, psychological evaluations, and testing, which have proved to be obstacles for candidates. Through this Act, these funds can also be used to help law enforcement agencies establish a Pipeline Partnership with primary schools, secondary schools, community colleges, and universities to cultivate relationships that are designed to increase recruitment and interest in the profession.

The Recruit and Retain Act also takes steps towards understanding how the profession found itself in this recruitment and retention crisis so we can get the tools and support we need to reverse it. This Act will play a vital role in helping states and localities hire and retain community police officers to ensure they can protect and serve America's communities efficiently and effectively.

NAPO is proud of our work to get this important piece of legislation signed into law.

## Please Help Sponsor an Event at the NAPO Convention

NAPO's 46th Annual Convention at the JW Marriott in Nashville, Tennessee is quickly approaching. We are busy planning what is sure to be a fantastic convention. Information regarding the convention is available at [www.napo.org/convention24](http://www.napo.org/convention24)

We would like to ask member organizations to please consider contributing \$500 - \$1000 towards the cost of the convention. We know this is a lot to consider, but the registration fees do not cover all the convention costs, and this way we can do our best to keep the registration fees reasonable.

If your organization would like to assist in sponsoring an event, please return the form and payment to NAPO no later than **June 26, 2024**.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact NAPO's Director of Events, Elizabeth Loranger at [eloranger@napo.org](mailto:eloranger@napo.org) or (703)549-0775.

Thank you in advance for helping to make NAPO's 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention a success!

Sincerely,



Mick McHale, President



Bill Johnson, Executive Director

## Social Security Fairness Act Update & Call to Action

NAPO participated in a meeting with coalition partners and staff of Representatives Garret Graves (R-LA) and Abigail Spanberger (D-VA), sponsors of the Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82) on May 30 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 next immediate action on the bill is a June 7 Senate Finance Committee field hearing in Ohio that will focus on the adverse effect the WEP and GPO have on public servants' retirement security. NAPO member

organization, the Ohio Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (OPBA), will be testifying at the hearing. The Senate version of the Social Security Fairness Act, S. 597, sponsored by Senators Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Susan Collins (R-ME), currently has 54 cosponsors. We are hoping this hearing will be a jumping off point in the Senate for movement on this important bill and a catalyst for garnering the 60 cosponsors necessary to make the Social Security Fairness Act filibuster-proof.

NAPO is once again asking our members to please send in a statement for the record or resubmit your previous statement to the Senate Finance Committee to drive the point home that the GPO and WEP are detrimental to the retirement security of millions of public sector retirees. 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 Friday, June 21. Please support our efforts by submitting comments now to [Statementsfortherecord@finance.senate.gov](mailto:Statementsfortherecord@finance.senate.gov) with the subject line "Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset."** You must submit your statement as a single-spaced 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](mailto:aedmiston@napo.org) when submitting your comments.

H.R. 82 currently has 320 bipartisan cosponsors and NAPO is continuing to lobby the remaining members of Congress who have not yet signed on, particularly those who sit on the House Ways and Means Committee, to join us in support of protecting public servants' well-earned Social Security benefits. Our goal in the House is to have the Social Security Fairness Act marked-up in the House by the July 4<sup>th</sup> recess. To get a markup and move the bill to the House floor, we must find a way to pay for at least part of the extraordinary cost of the bill: approximately \$150 billion. This will be the biggest obstacle to us moving this legislation forward and we are working with Representatives Graves and Spanberger on a solution.

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](mailto: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.

## **Bill Introduced to Allow Purchase of Tactical Vehicles through Byrne JAG Program**

Representative Angie Craig (D-MN) introduced the Protect Local Law Enforcement Act (H.R. 8429), which would nullify part of President Biden's executive order on police reform by removing restrictions on the types of vehicles that can be purchased with federal funds. NAPO worked with Representative Craig and her staff on this important legislation in response to the February 18 murder of two Burnsville, Minnesota police officers, Officers Paul Elmstrand and Matthew Ruge, and firefighter/paramedic Adam Finseth, who responded to a domestic abuse call that turned into an hours-long standoff.

During the February 18 incident, a BearCat that belonged to the Rosemount Police Department was utilized by SWAT officers from the Apple Valley and Rosemount Police Departments. The armored vehicle was used to extract the fatally shot officers and firefighter and prevent further harm to first responders. It sustained heavy gunfire and by the end took 41 shots from a rifle, protecting the lives of the officers inside.

President Biden's 2022 police reform Executive Order reinstated the restrictions that were put in place by President Obama's 2015 Executive Order on what equipment state and local law enforcement could acquire

through the 1033 Program and how that equipment must be used. Those restrictions were immediately reestablished and expanded for the 1033 Program as well as for Department of Homeland Security and Justice Department grants, effectively eliminating state and local law enforcement's access to needed equipment, including armored, tactical, and command vehicles.

Programs like the 1033 Program have been vital resources in allowing state and local law enforcement to acquire items used in search and rescue operations, disaster response, and active shooter situations that they otherwise would not be able to afford. This equipment has not led to the "militarization" of police, but rather has proven to be essential not only in protecting communities against violent criminals, but also in responding to natural disasters, which are unfortunately increasing in frequency.

The legitimate and well-demonstrated needs of officers are being overlooked due to the optics of law enforcement agencies obtaining this equipment from the federal government. The Protect Local Law Enforcement Act will help remedy this by allowing state and local law enforcement to use DOJ grant funding to purchase armored, tactical, and command vehicles. We thank Representative Craig for her support and look forward to moving this important officer and community safety bill.

## **DETECT Fentanyl & Xylazine Act Introduced in Senate**

Senator John Cornyn (R-TX), together with Senators Jon Ossoff (D-GA), James Lankford (R-OK), and Kyrsten Sinema (I-AZ), introduced the Detection Equipment and Technology Evaluation to Counter the Threat of (DETECT) Fentanyl and Xylazine Act (S. 4419). NAPO worked with Senator Cornyn's staff on this bill, which would authorize the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to conduct research and development, testing, and evaluation on equipment that would help law enforcement better detect fentanyl and other drugs.

The DETECT Fentanyl and Xylazine Act would create a new statutory responsibility for DHS's Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) to carry out research and development (R&D) to improve the safety, effectiveness, and efficiency of drug detection equipment and reference libraries used by federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies to identify unknown substances.

Fentanyl, particularly illicitly manufactured fentanyl, xylazine and other synthetic drugs are having deadly consequences on communities across the country, both big and small. Because illicit fentanyl is so powerful — just a few salt-sized grains can kill an adult — small amounts go a long way for drug traffickers. These relatively small and potent amounts mean fentanyl is difficult and hazardous to detect, making it easy to traffic and a danger to those trying to interdict it. The DETECT Fentanyl and Xylazine Act would give law enforcement the tools necessary to safely detect and crack down on the trafficking of fentanyl and related opioids.

NAPO thanks Senators Cornyn, Ossoff, Lankford, and Sinema for their support in our fight against fentanyl in our communities and we look forward to working with them to move the DETECT Fentanyl and Xylazine Act through the Senate.

## **NAPO Participates in De Minimis Coalition Virtual Fly-In**

The Coalition to Close the De Minimis Loophole held a virtual fly-in on May 21 and 22, meeting with the staff of members of the Senate Finance Committee including Committee Chairman Ron Wyden (D-OR), Senators Ron Johnson (R-WI), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Thom Tillis (R-NC), Bob Casey (D-PA), and Maria

Cantwell (D-WA). NAPO and members of the Coalition previously met with Ranking Member Mike Crapo's (R-ID) committee staff. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the de minimis trade loophole that is allowing fentanyl and other illicit products and goods to freely flow into the country and the need to close it.

With the House Ways and Means Committee approving the End China's De Minimis Abuse Act (H.R. 7979) on April 17, it is important we express to the Senate our concerns with the inadequacy of the bill. While NAPO appreciates the Committee recognizing the dangers of de minimis and taking up a bill to address it, the End China's De Minimis Abuse Act is a half-measure that fails to fully close the loophole. It would exclude only a portion of imports from China—a country with a widely-documented history of shipping fentanyl, its analogues, and its precursor chemicals into the United States via de minimis—and fail to adequately address the illegal drug trade.

In our meetings with Senate Finance Committee members, we expressed our concerns with de minimis and urged lawmakers to work with us on comprehensive legislation that tackles the myriad facets of this complex problem. 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 drugs, particularly fentanyl and its precursors, into the country. Closing the de minimis loophole would help staunch the surge of illicit narcotics that are exploiting this exemption.

NAPO, together with our Coalition partners, will continue working with Congress to develop a proposal that addresses the dangers of the loophole.

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