



The Washington Report

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Representing America's Finest

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NAPO WASHINGTON REPORT FLASH

Today, NAPO participated in a teleconference to discuss FY14 funding for the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program (JMHCP) and the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act (JMCA) Reauthorization. The teleconference was led by Mr. Jamal Nelson (Council of State Governments Justice Center).

JMHCP was created by the Mentally III Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act of 2004 in response to requests from state government officials to recommend improvements to the criminal justice system's response to people with mental illness. The purpose of the program is to increase public safety by facilitating collaboration among the criminal justice, juvenile justice, mental health treatment, and substance abuse systems to increase access to treatment for this unique group of offenders (Office of Justice Programs). Senator Al Franken (D-MN) and Representative Richard Nugent (F-FL) have sponsored the JMCA reauthorization legislation (S.162 & H.R. 401).

This year's funding requests are due by April 5, 2013, which is a more compacted timeframe than previous years. The working group is trying to garner as many signatures on the appropriations letter as possible, particularly from the mental health and law enforcement caucuses.

In a somewhat related matter, the Vice President's Office called on NAPO today to discuss legislation anticipated to be brought to the Senate floor sometime next week. Background checks on firearms purchases and other related legislation were discussed. In discussions with senior staff for the Vice President, NAPO executive director Bill Johnson was careful to reiterate NAPO's position on these matters, and to also emphasize the need to carefully review the actual legislation introduced prior to being able to assure support one way or the other. We will continue to do everything we can to keep our members informed about this situation as it develops.

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