



The Washington Report

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

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NAPO Endorses Building America's Trust Act

[NAPO pledged its support for the Building America's Trust Act](#), which was introduced on August 3 by Senator John Cornyn (R-TX), together with Senators John Barrasso (R-WY), Ron Johnson (R-WI) and Thom Tillis (R-NC). This bill increases federal support and resources at our nation's borders to strengthen border security and enables federal, state and local law enforcement officers to work together to protect our communities through improved immigration enforcement.

NAPO has long supported efforts to clamp down on sanctuary policies in cities, which make it difficult for law enforcement to effectively protect communities from violent criminal aliens. The country's immigration system relies on state and local law enforcement collaborating and communicating with their federal counterparts. Sanctuary cities forbid their local law enforcement from cooperating with federal immigration officials, which has led to the release of violent criminals back into our communities. The Building America's Trust Act takes crucial steps to eliminating sanctuary jurisdictions, which pose real threats to the American people, and increases penalties for criminal aliens who re-enter the United States illegally.

Further, cross-border crime is a significant concern for law enforcement. It impacts communities both along our Southwest border and across the country as drugs trafficked across the border are transported and sold on our neighborhood streets. With these drugs come an increase in gang activity, assaults, larceny and burglary to our communities. By targeting aliens associated with violent crime and criminal gangs, this bill gives law enforcement an important tool in fighting cross-border crimes as well as the steady growth in gang participation and drug crimes nationwide.

The Building America's Trust Act will also increase the number Border Patrol officers, Homeland Security Investigations (HIS) agents, Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) officers, Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) officers, Immigration Judges and Assistant U.S. Attorneys in order to secure our borders and ports of entry and reduce threats to our national security and public safety.

Today, state and local law enforcement are facing more challenges than ever before, and officers are taking on additional duties to meet these challenges. From an increase in violent crime rates and a constant vigilance against terrorist threats to illegal immigration issues, law enforcement officers can no longer solely focus on community-oriented policing. Through additional law enforcement support along the border and increased penalties for criminal aliens, this bill provides state and local law enforcement the support necessary to help them focus on keeping our communities safe.

We look forward to working Senators Cornyn, Barrasso, Johnson and Tillis to pass this important legislation.

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NAPO on the Hill: Protecting Pensions, Senate Judiciary Committee

Protecting Public Pensions

NAPO joined members of the Public Pension Network, a coalition of public pension practitioners and retirement systems, public sector labor organizations, and state and local government representatives, in meetings with House Ways and Means Committee staff to discuss public pensions and make certain that the Committee is not planning on including any changes to public pensions in tax reform. We met with staff from the offices of **Representatives Linda Sánchez (D-CA) and John Larson (D-CT)**.

With Congress pledging to take up tax reform when it returns from August recess in September, we want to ensure that public pension reform is not included as part of the discussion. Specifically, we are working to gain assurance that the Public Employee Pension Transparency Act (PEPTA) is not on the table. In these meetings, we expressed our strong opposition to the public pension requirements contained in PEPTA as they do not protect benefits, save costs or improve retirement system funding. We believe they are unfunded mandates and an inappropriate federal intrusion into areas that are the fiscal responsibility of sovereign States and local governments, and are conflicting, administratively burdensome and costly. Further, PEPTA threatens to eliminate the tax-exempt bonding authority of state and local governments.

Federal interference in state and local public pensions not only violates the principles of federalism, but represents a fundamental lack of understanding regarding state and local government operations and financing, including governmental accounting rules and strict legal constraints already in place that require open financial reporting and processes. It also ignores the fact that every state and countless localities have recently made modifications to pension financing, benefits structures, or both.

Staff understood our concerns and stated that both Representatives Sanchez and Larson support and understand the importance of state and local public pensions. While there are a few public pension reform proposals floating around, PEPTA is not one of them and those that are out there do not have much support. NAPO told the staff that we are available as a resource for the Committee and they promised to keep us posted on any efforts to change public pensions within the tax reform discussion.

NAPO will continue to educate members of the Committee and Congress of our opposition to public pension reform and will work to ensure such provisions are not included in tax reform or any other legislation under consideration.

Senate Judiciary Committee

NAPO met with the new chief crime and constitution counsel to Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Charles Grassley (R-IA) to introduce the organization, review our priorities for the Committee and discuss the Committee's agenda for the rest of the year.

NAPO's top priorities for the Committee include the Thin Blue Line Act, which passed the House back in May, the Stop Dangerous Sanctuary Cities Act, and the reauthorization of the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Program, in addition to the numerous NAPO-supported bills that have been referred to the Committee. The staff did not indicate whether the Committee would take up these bills, but stated that besides moving through the rest of President Trump's Judiciary nominations, the Chairman wants to focus on criminal justice reform and asset forfeiture reform.

NAPO opposed the Chairman's asset forfeiture reform legislation – the Deterring Undue Enforcement by Protecting Rights of Citizens from Excessive Searches and Seizures (DUE PROCESS) Act – last Congress because we felt that the changes it would make to the program's structure and processes would negatively affect law enforcement's ability to disrupt criminal activity. Many of the concerns the bill was looking to address were fixed in

the changes the Attorney General announced on July 18, which expand state and local agencies' ability to participate in the Department's civil asset forfeiture program and put in place additional protections to ensure this important tool is not misused. [NAPO endorsed these changes in a letter to the Attorney General](#) and we continue to actively support a robust civil asset forfeiture program within the DOJ.

NAPO also opposed the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act last Congress because we felt it tried to do too much at once, and consequently, would negatively impact public safety. We are open to working with the Chairman and the Committee on both bills, assuming they take our concerns seriously and work with us to address them. This includes ensuring state and local law enforcement can continue to participate in a strong asset forfeiture program and that states and localities do not become the dumping ground for federal criminals due to sentencing and correctional reforms without the necessary safeguards and boost in support and resources in place.

NAPO looks forward to working with the Committee on these issues and will ensure that the voice of rank-and-file is heard. In the meantime, we continue to push for the Committee to take up and move our priority legislation to make certain state and local law enforcement can continue to effectively serve and protect our nation's communities. If you have any questions, please contact Andy Edmiston at aedmiston@napo.org.

Congress Passes NAPO-Endorsed Rapid DNA Act

In a victory for NAPO, Congress passed the Rapid DNA Act (S. 139 / H.R. 510), sponsored by Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI), on August 1. This bill would give law enforcement agencies greater ability to use technology to process DNA evidence in the field.

Science and technology has allowed state and local law enforcement to use DNA evidence to convict guilty offenders and exonerate the innocent. However, the processing of DNA evidence under current law can take weeks or even months due to backlogs at crime labs. This significantly delays a perpetrator being brought to justice or an innocent victim being safe-guarded from further harm. Rapid DNA technologies allow an officer to know within hours whether an individual is wanted for an outstanding crime or has a connection to evidence from a crime scene.

The Rapid DNA Act will ensure that law enforcement agencies that use rapid DNA technology can upload profiles generated by those instruments into the FBI's Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) in the field, following standards and procedures to be issued by the FBI, rather than having to go through an accredited crime lab. With science and technology evolving, this legislation allows law enforcement to keep pace, strengthening our ability to safeguard our communities.

We thank Senator Hatch and Congressman Sensenbrenner for their leadership on this issue and for their continued support for the law enforcement community. If you have any questions, please contact Andy Edmiston at aedmiston@napo.org.

NAPO Supports Reauthorization of DOJ's E-Crime Grant Program

[NAPO supports the White Collar Crime Control Act](#), introduced by Senator John Cornyn (R-TX), which reauthorizes the Economic, High Technology and Internet Crime Prevention (E-Crime) grant program within the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Program. The E-Crime grant program provides critical funding, training and technical assistance to enhance the capacity of state and local law enforcement to prevent, investigate and respond to economic, cyber, and high-tech ("white collar") crimes. The E-Crime grants help ensure law enforcement departments and agencies of all sizes are equipped to respond these "white collar" crimes, including

financial and identity theft, cyber stalking and internet crimes against children, which in this technological age can happen in any part of the country.

Law enforcement's job is to serve and protect our communities from all crime, whether "white collar" or violent crime, and the E-Crime grants help departments across the nation better investigate and prosecute these crimes. NAPO supports the reauthorization of this important grant program and we look forward to working with Senator Cornyn to pass this legislation.

NAPO Endorses Bill to Stop Online Sex Trafficking

[NAPO endorsed the Stop Online Sex Trafficking Act](#), sponsored by Senators Rob Portman (R-OH) and Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), which would ensure that websites, such as backpage.com, that facilitate traffickers in advertising the sale of unlawful sex acts with sex trafficking victims can be brought to justice.

Since its inception in 1998, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's (NCMEC) CyberTipline has received more than 16.5 million reports of suspected child sexual exploitation. In 2016 alone, the CyberTipLine received 8.2 million reports of apparent child sexual abuse images, suspected "sextortion", child sex trafficking and child sexual molestation. An increasing number of these victims are trafficked online. Unfortunately, due to numerous court rulings, survivors of online trafficking cannot sue their advertisers due to Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act (CDA), which inadvertently gives broad criminal immunity to websites that facilitate sex trafficking. This significantly hampers law enforcement's ability to enforce state trafficking laws against such websites.

The Stop Enabling Sex Trafficking Act addresses this issue by narrowly amending Section 230 to allow states and victims to bring cases against bad actors that facilitate sex trafficking, while safeguarding the freedom of the internet.

We look forward to working with Senators Portman and Blumenthal to pass this important legislation. Congresswoman Ann Wagner is the sponsor of the House companion bill, H.R. 1865, the Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act.

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