



# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

*Representing America's Finest*

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## EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

November 8, 2022

### **MICHAEL McHALE**

President  
*Florida Police Benevolent Association*

The Honorable Gary Peters  
Chair  
Committee on Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rob Portman  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

### **JOHN A. FLYNN**

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*Police Benevolent Association of New York City*

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### **JAMES PALMER**

Parliamentarian  
*Wisconsin Professional Police Association*

### **WILLIAM J. JOHNSON, CAE**

Executive Director and  
General Counsel

Dear Chairman Peters and Ranking Member Portman,

The National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), representing over 241,000 sworn law enforcement officers across the country, joins with our member organization, the Air Marshal National Council (AMNC), in calling for Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas to stop the diversion of Federal Air Marshals to the southern border. We write to respectfully request your assistance in halting these forced deployments.

On November 7, Secretary Mayorkas began deploying Federal Air Marshals to the southern border to assist Customs and Border Patrol in mainly non-law enforcement duties. Until now, these 21-day deployments had been voluntary for air marshals, but due to the lack of interest in such deployments, the Secretary has made them mandatory.

According to a January 2021 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, the heavy travel requirements of the Federal Air Marshal Service have resulted in enduring quality of life challenges including unpredictable work schedules and mental and physical health issues. The GAO report also found that the Service has done nothing to address the overall health of its workforce, which this nation relies on to protect our aviation system. Forcing 21-plus day deployments to the southern border only exacerbates these workforce issues.

These deployments are not only a health and wellness issue for air marshals, but they are also a safety issue for our country. The Service is understaffed and covering fewer flights since before September 11, 2001. Many high-risk flights are going without air marshals, and we are about to enter the busiest air travel season – a season during which there have been two previous unsuccessful attempts to blow up planes. We strongly question why Federal Air Marshals are being diverted to the southern border, where no Federal emergency has been declared, when our planes and skies are left relatively unsecured.

Therefore, NAPO joins the AMNC, whose letter is enclosed, in urging your intervention to put a stop to these involuntary deployments for the sake of our marshals and the safety of our skies. If we can provide any assistance, please feel free to contact me at (703) 549-0775.

Sincerely,

William J. Johnson  
Executive Director



Honorable Gary Peters  
Chair  
U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Honorable Rob Portman  
Ranking Member  
U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Honorable Bennie Thompson  
Chair  
House Committee on Homeland Security

Honorable John Katko  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Homeland Security

## **Stop The Forced Deployments of Air Marshals to The Southern Border**

Distinguished Members,

History appears to be repeating itself and no one is paying attention. Currently, at the order of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Mayorkas, hundreds of Federal Air Marshals (FAMs) are being forced to deploy to the southern border to assist the Border Patrol in mainly non-law enforcement duties. The DHS Secretary is taking hundreds of FAMs out of the skies during the busiest travel season and during a time when terrorists have attempted to attack the homeland not so long ago. On December 22, 2001 Richard Reid attempted to blow up and kill hundreds of Americans aboard American Airlines flight 63, by igniting his shoes laced with explosives. On December 25, 2009 Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab boarded Northwest Airlines flight 253. Upon final approach to Detroit International Airport, Mr. Abdulmutallab attempted to ignite explosives that were concealed in his underwear.



Secretary Mayorkas's responsibility is to properly deploy law enforcement agents within the authorized intentions of Congress. Mayorkas does not have the authority to take FAMs out of the air to deploy to the border without Congressional approval. This is impounded by the fact that the President has yet to declare the situation an emergency. Most startling is the fact that Mayorkas himself has recently said that our country's infrastructure and aviation remains a high threat. The agency is classifying the amount, of high-risk flights that are going uncovered due to these deployments. If the current deployment of air marshals is allowed to continue, we could face another attack in our aviation system. That tragedy could result in thousands of casualties and alter the course of American history.

Our Federal Air Marshals have endured what the agency describes as an arduous flight schedule for the last twenty years. They have been deployed on average two to three nights every week away from home in defense of our nation. This has led to the FAMs having the highest divorce rate and one of the highest suicide rates in all of law enforcement. The marriages and families that remain intact today are hanging on by a thread. To force our FAMs to endure multiple 21 plus day deployments to the border will have a tremendous effect on the workforce and their families.

We respectfully request your intervention to put a stop to these involuntary deployments before it's too late for both our country and our FAMs.

Respectfully,

*David Londo*

David Londo

*President*

*Air Marshal National Council*

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