



## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

*Representing America's Finest*

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December 3, 2025

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The Honorable Andrew Garbarino  
Chair  
Committee on Homeland Security  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bennie Thompson  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Homeland Security  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

### **RE: December 3, 2025 “When Badges Become Targets: How Anti-Law Enforcement Rhetoric Fuels Violence Against Officers” Hearing**

Dear Chairman Garbarino and Ranking Member Thompson:

I am proud to serve as President of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPPO). I am submitting this statement today on behalf of NAPPO, representing some 250,000 sworn law enforcement officers throughout the United States. NAPPO is a coalition of over 1,000 police unions and associations from across the nation, which was organized for the purpose of advancing the interests of America's law enforcement officers through legislative advocacy, political action, and education.

I want to thank the Committee for holding this important hearing recognizing the dangerous profession law enforcement officers have and the risks they face when serving and protecting their communities.

Law enforcement officer assaults, injuries, and deaths have increased sharply in recent years. According to a May 2025 report from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), 342 officers were shot in the line of duty in 2024, of which 50 officers died from their injuries. 80 of those officers were shot and 18 died in 62 separate ambushes or premeditated, calculated assaults. While the number of officers dying from their injuries may be decreasing, the number of officers being targeted for violence remains persistently high.

The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund 2024 End-of-Year Law Enforcement Officers Fatalities Report shows that 147 officers died in the line of duty in 2024, a 25% increase from 2023. From 2010 through the end of 2020, an average of 53 officers were killed each year by felonious assaults involving firearms.

The consistent drumbeat by politicians, of distrust of the police, absolutely helps engender attacks on officers and encourages the public not to comply with police commands. It is becoming more and more common for persons who come in contact with the police to resist, obstruct, interfere, thwart and even attack officers. This is an

unacceptable environment in which officers find themselves and it is impacting not just officer morale, but also retention, hiring, and officer safety and wellness.

Further, officers are targets for disgruntled individuals who harbor hatred for the profession and blame them for all of society's ills and for policies that the officers themselves have no control over. We strongly believe there should be increased penalties for those who harm, or target for harm, public safety officers. Increased penalties make important differences in the attitudes of criminals towards public safety officers and can ensure protection for the community.

Tepid responses to attacks upon law enforcement officers do nothing to discourage future attacks, which is why federal legislation to increase penalties is so important. NAPO calls on Congress to act on their support for our nation's law enforcement and take up vital legislation to protect officers, including the Protect and Serve Act (H.R. 1551), the Back the Blue Act, the Thin Blue Line Act (H.R. 378), and the Justice for Fallen Law Enforcement Act (S. 166). These bills would help to bring federal resources to bear in the prosecution of those who attempt to harm or murder any public safety officer. Any persons contemplating harming an officer must know that they will face serious punishments.

In addition to the enactment of new and increased federal penalties for violent assaults on officers, NAPO supports increased protections for officers through the utilization of existing federal criminal provisions and the enactment of new federal laws. We have long advocated that the United States Department of Justice can and should use current law to address (1) the assault and murder of federally funded state and local law enforcement officers, such as those officers whose agencies or jurisdictions receive aid from the Departments of Justice or Homeland Security; and (2) the assault and murder of state and local officers engaged in the protection of federally recognized civil rights, such as those officers attacked while safeguarding protests. NAPO believes that state and local law enforcement, as part of the performance of their duties, are protectors of citizens' civil rights and thus any attacks on officers who are engaged in such duties should be viewed by the Department's Civil Rights Division as a violation of protected federal civil rights.

Show our nation's officers through actions and not just words that you have their back and believe that ensuring protections for them will also ensure our communities are safer. We look forward to working with the Committee to protect those who serve and protect our communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important issue. If we can provide any assistance, please feel free to contact me at (703) 549-0775.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael McHale". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and last name "McHale" clearly distinguishable.

Michael McHale  
President