The Washington Report

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

October 16, 2026

NAPO Attends Lunch with President Trump in Honor of First Responders

NAPO President Mick McHale and Executive Director Bill Johnson attended a lunch hosted by President Trump in the Rose Garden at the White House on October 15 in honor of our nation's law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other first responders, as well as the sacrifices they make while serving our communities. The President delivered remarks and was joined by several administration officials, including Vice President JD Vance, Border Czar Tom Homan, War Secretary Pete Hegseth, Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin, FBI Director Kash Patel, and Attorney General Todd Blanche.

During his remarks, President Trump announced that he had directed the Department of Justice to pursue the death penalty for anyone who deliberately murders a police officer or firefighter in the line of duty. This action builds on his January 2025 executive order directing the Attorney General to pursue federal jurisdiction and seek the death penalty in cases involving the murder of state and local law enforcement officers.

NAPO has long advocated for such a policy regarding the murder of law enforcement officers because anyone who kills or assaults an officer must know that serious punishment will follow.

NAPO appreciates the President's continued show of support for law enforcement and public safety. We value our ability to work with him and his Administration to ensure our nation's law enforcement can efficiently and effectively serve and protect our communities.

DOJ Holds Listening Sessions on Improving PSOB Program

The Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs (OJP) held listening sessions on October 13, 2026, to learn about claimant and stakeholder experiences with various aspects of the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Program and the claims process. At the start of the session, the Acting Director of the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), Tammie Gregg, stated that the Department's goals are to improve the claimant experience, increase program efficiency, and accelerate claim determinations.

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The moderator asked participants for feedback on the entire process, from filing an initial application and checking a claim's status through receiving a determination and seeking review. The moderator also asked which aspects of the current procedures have been the most confusing or unclear. In addition to participating in the listening sessions, NAPO submitted **written comments** to OJP reiterating our experiences and concerns with the PSOB Program.

NAPO urged the PSOB Program to address longstanding deficiencies in transparency, accountability, claims assistance, and program management. Although we have worked with Congress to enact four laws over the past decade to improve the Program and expand benefit eligibility, PSOB has failed to implement many required transparency and accountability measures. NAPO is calling for immediate action to:

- Expedite claims processing and provide claimants and their representatives with clear, regular updates explaining delays and outstanding documentation.
- Establish procedures for incomplete claims, including seeking assistance from stakeholders and using subpoena authority when agencies fail to provide required information.
- Publish clear disability eligibility standards, particularly the definition of "gainful work," to promote consistency and help claimants understand eligibility requirements.
- Issue implementing regulations for the Protecting America's First Responders Act of 2021, the Public Safety Officer Support Act of 2022, and the Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act of 2025.
- Streamline benefits for September 11 responders and survivors already certified through the World Trade Center Health Program or September 11th Victim Compensation Fund, avoiding duplicative reviews.

The PSOB Program is a vital resource for officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty and for the families of officers killed in service. We are advising DOJ and OJP to implement the necessary reforms so that benefits are delivered consistently, transparently, and without unreasonable delays, thereby fulfilling Congress's intent to support those who sacrifice for their communities.

NAPO stands ready to work with the Department and OJP to improve the PSOB Program and ensure that the survivors of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty and officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty are provided every available resource and benefit in a timely and transparent manner.

NAPO on the Hill: Monitor Accountability Act; FirstNet Reauthorization

Monitor Accountability Act

NAPO is working with Senator John Kennedy (R-LA) and his staff to secure much-needed bipartisan support from members of the Senate Judiciary Committee for the Monitor Accountability Act (S. 4917 / H.R. 8365). The House passed the legislation with bipartisan support earlier this year, and NAPO is working to advance the bill through the Senate before the end of the year. Securing bipartisan support within the Senate Judiciary Committee is a critical step toward achieving that goal.

The Monitor Accountability Act would establish clear standards for federal district courts when appointing monitors to oversee state and local government agencies. Specifically, the legislation would establish term limits for monitors, place reasonable limits on monitoring fees, and provide a clear process for narrowing or terminating a monitorship when its objectives have been met. These reforms would help ensure that monitorships remain focused, proportionate, and accountable while protecting the interests and rights of state and local governments and the public safety professionals who serve their communities.

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Federal consent decrees can have significant and lasting consequences for state and local law enforcement agencies. Too often, once a decree is imposed, the monitoring process can become self-perpetuating, with oversight continuing long after the original concerns have been addressed. Monitorships can evolve into costly, open-ended arrangements in which requirements expand, expectations shift, and agencies face new obligations despite having made substantial progress toward compliance. As a result, law enforcement agencies and their officers may remain subject to burdensome restrictions, administrative demands, and mounting costs even after the original objectives of the consent decree have been achieved.

The Monitor Accountability Act would help restore accountability and balance to this process by ensuring that monitorships have clear parameters, reasonable costs, and a defined path toward completion. NAPO believes that federal oversight must serve a legitimate and clearly defined purpose, with measurable objectives and an appropriate endpoint. State and local law enforcement agencies should not be subjected to indefinite oversight or unnecessary burdens once those standards have been met.

We are urging members of the Senate Judiciary Committee to support this bipartisan legislation and work toward its passage before the end of the year. Enacting the Monitor Accountability Act would be an important step toward ensuring that consent decrees respect the authority, resources, and operational needs of state and local governments and the law enforcement officers who protect our communities.

FirstNet Reauthorization

NAPO continues to urge Senate leadership and the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation to prioritize reauthorization of the First Responder Network (FirstNet) Authority when the Senate returns following the November elections. The House passed the First Responder Network Authority Reauthorization Act (H.R. 7386) by voice vote on April 20. The Authority's current authorization is set to expire in February 2027.

Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Ted Cruz (R-TX) is expected to release revised bill text addressing concerns raised by first responder organizations about the House-passed legislation. H.R. 7386 would expand the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) authority over the FirstNet Board, potentially limiting the Board's independence and increasing administrative burdens on FirstNet. NAPO shares these concerns and will continue to monitor the legislation as it advances in the Senate, advocating for FirstNet to retain the authority and flexibility needed to protect and expand the public safety network.

In a February 2022 report, the Government Accountability Office warned that failure to reauthorize the Authority on time could jeopardize network operations and improvements, potentially resulting in public safety agencies losing access to the system. Congress must act before the February 2027 expiration to ensure continuity of service and preserve FirstNet's ability to provide priority and preemption capabilities. These capabilities are a NAPO priority because they enable first responders to communicate and coordinate during emergencies, major events, and other situations when commercial networks become congested.

Any amendments adopted by the Senate would require the bill to return to the House for further consideration before it could be sent to the President for signature. This additional procedural step underscores the importance of timely congressional action. NAPO will continue pressing Congress to reauthorize the First Responder Network Authority and preserve a reliable, interoperable communications network that first responders depend on to protect their communities, particularly when communication is most critical.

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Join Us for NAPO's Annual Pension & Benefits Seminar

February 7 – 9, 2027
Caesar's Palace Hotel, Las Vegas

Please join the National Association of Police Organizations at our **39th Annual Police, Fire, EMS, & Municipal Employee Pension & Benefits Seminar, February 7 –9 , 2027,** at Caesars Palace Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada.

NAPO's Annual Pension & Benefits Seminar educates pension system and employee representatives, along with their providers and vendors, about the latest issues affecting the pension and benefits industry. Topics will include:

- Results and Effects of the Midterm Congressional Elections on Federal Policy
- Effects of Mid-East Conflicts on Markets and Economic Uncertainty
- Growing use of AI, Benefits and Risks
- Mounting National Debt and Threats to the U.S. Credit Rating
- Liability Pitfalls & Practical Advice for Fiduciaries
- "Outside the Box" Benefits as a Component of Recruitment & Retention

We will examine these areas and more as we evaluate the effect of these trends on public employment benefits and security, and the near- and mid-term future for U.S. and world economic conditions.

Take an active role in improving the future of your fund by registering today. You will find information regarding registration and hotel reservations on NAPO's website: www.NAPO.org/PB27

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 or (703) 549-0775.

Please monitor NAPO's website, www.napo.org, and Facebook page: National Association of Police Organizations, and follow us on X at NAPOpolice for breaking news and updates.

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SAVE THE DATES

Please make note of NAPO's 2027 Events

NAPO's 39th Annual Pension & Benefits Seminar

February 7 - February 9, 2027
Caesars Palace Hotel & Casino • Las Vegas, Nevada
www.napo.org/PB27

34th Annual TOP COPS Awards®

May 14, 2027
Omni Shoreham Hotel • Washington, District of Columbia
www.napo.org/TC27

NAPO's Annual Lobby Day & Legislative Luncheon

May 13, 2027
Omni Shoreham Hotel & U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, District of Columbia
www.napo.org/lobby27

NAPO's 49th Annual Convention

July 18 – July 21, 2027
Universal City Hilton Hotel
Los Angeles, California
www.napo.org/Convention27

2027 Executive Board Meetings:

February 7 • May 15 • July 18

For Event Details, Sponsorship & Speaking Opportunities
Contact NAPO's Director of Events Elizabeth Loranger:
eloranger@napo.org 800-322-6276

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