

A TRIBUTE TO FAMILIES OF THE FALLEN // P. 12

FOP



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36 // Saluting the Fallen National Police Week 2022

EXECUTIVE BOARD

12 // President's Message

It's All About the White Chairs

16 // Vice President's Message

A Return to Broken Windows?

18 // Secretary's Message

The Highest Honor

22 // Second Vice President's Message

Updates From Philadelphia

24 // Sergeant at Arms' Message

If You Can't Beat Them, Cancel Them?

26 // National Trustees Chairman's Message

Affordable Health Care for FOP Members

DEPARTMENTS

28 // Member Spotlight

Scottie DeLashmit

32 // Local Lodge News

Updates from Florida and New Mexico

40 // Wellness

Solutions That Work: Building an Effective
Wellness Program

Support Resources for Retirees and Caregivers

46 // Washington Report

Updates on the President's Budget Proposal and
FOP-Backed Bills

50 // Legal Counsel

Keeping Your Estate Plan Healthy

52 // FOP Legal Defense Plan

New Retired Law Enforcement Concealed Carry Legal
Defense Coverage

54 // Labor News

Labor Services: A Year in Review



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It's All About the White Chairs

// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact Patrick Yoes at (504) 234-4300, or pyoes@fop.net.

In New Mexico, a mother and her four children pack their bags for an early morning flight. It's been just over a year since her husband, a patrolman with the New Mexico State Police, was shot and killed in the line of duty. She's heading to the nation's capital to attend a series of memorial services and workshops.

Each event is carefully designed to not only memorialize her loved one, but also help her cope with her loss and hopefully help find closure in a seemingly endless nightmare that replays in her mind each and every time she closes her eyes at night.

She is not alone. Families from every state and U.S. territory prepare for this same journey. They are the wives and husbands, mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, friends and partners of the 536 law enforcement officers who gave their last full measure in the service of others during 2021. Each is struggling with the senseless loss of their loved ones and desperately hopes that this journey will help make sense of the senseless.

That next morning, a tractor trailer arrives on the West Front Lawn of the U.S. Capitol. Two men hop out, walk to the back of the truck to open the trailer doors and begin unloading chairs — thousands of them — some white, some blue, some red. Each to be placed in rows according to a color-coded diagram, a layout painstakingly developed by dedicated volunteers.

That same morning, before she and her children leave for the airport, she is filled with competing emotions. But as she cries



alone, she hears her children coming down the stairs with their bags. She wipes the tears, turns off the light and heads out the door.

A few hours later, as they begin boarding their plane, at our nation's capital, work crews begin erecting stages, installing sound systems, railings and security perimeters for the 41st annual Fraternal Order of Police National Peace Officers' Memorial Service, which is only days away.

She and her children arrive in Washington, as do the hundreds of families with whom she will share her grief, for their loved ones have fallen, too. It is their nightmare as well, and together they will

find ways to cope with their emptiness. As they begin this experience, they sit in a room with other surviving families and cry, laugh, talk and listen. They attend workshops put on by those who understand their pain firsthand.

In the little downtime between the workshops and gatherings, she rounds up her children and joins others as they head over to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial. This solemn, 3-acre park is a special place. Here, their loved ones' names are forever engraved on granite walls. It is here where these heroes will take their rightful place of honor among the names of over 22,000 fallen officers who also gave their last full measure in the service of others.

Any other time of the year at this memorial, you find a beautiful tribute that ensures that no name of a fallen hero is ever forgotten. You feel the magnitude and the importance of all those

names collectively ... how one officer lost ... adds up to so many.

But this is National Police Week, and as strange as it sounds, the memorial comes to life. Names become faces and stories — a husband, wife, parent, father, mother, a child, a partner, a best friend — you see parts of their life and this is when the events of National Police Week touch a deeper place in your soul.

As dusk approaches, she and her new friends, forever bonded by their loss, board

Continued on page 14 >

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Continued from page 12 >

buses for a short ride to the National Mall where a somber candlelight vigil begins.

What they see when they arrive is humbling, there are already tens of thousands of people in attendance. They have traveled from across the country to join them, the surviving families, in honoring their loved ones.

As the sunlight fades, the names of each of their officers are read out loud. Tens of thousands of candles are lit and raised to honor the fallen loved ones. She is overwhelmed by the support of thousands of strangers who share in their remembrance, their healing and their sorrow.

As the early morning light appears across town at the Capitol, the site begins to take shape. Several thousand white chairs are set up directly in front of a stage bearing the presidential seal. An even larger number of blue and red chairs flank them on each side. To the rear, volunteers begin roping off a large standing area while others set up tents at the entrances for security checkpoints.

A few blocks west, a handful of runners complete their journey from Philadelphia to the memorial in honor of their fallen. Just north, bicyclists and motorcyclists turn on to Florida Avenue for the final stretch of their honor ride.

Back at the Capitol, a small army of volunteers go down their checklists and become tired and frustrated with the last-minute changes and budget constraints. Yet, in the background, the sounds of "Taps" can faintly be heard from buglers practicing in the shade.

Their somber sound is occasionally drowned out by the bellowing of bagpipes practicing "Amazing Grace" by a group determined to ensure every note be perfect.

Police Honor Guard teams from hundreds of agencies, from the largest to the smallest, practice under the sometimes brutal mid-spring sun to ensure that their every step and turn occur with pinpoint precision.

The sights and sounds of so many remind these volunteers why their work is so important.

The morning of May 15, she and other surviving families begin to board buses for the Capitol. Escorted by what seems like miles of motorcycle officers, they cross the bridge over the Potomac River and enter the District.

Driving alongside the National Mall, they pass one memorial after another — each one dedicated to American heroes. She is proud knowing her loved one is among these heroes.

The buses enter the Capitol complex and the families of the fallen begin to disembark. As they make their way to their seats, thousands of uniformed officers stand side

by side, creating a cordon of honor leading to the white chairs.

Ask any volunteer why they give their all to this service. Ask any FOP member why they spend a large portion of their dues for this service. Ask any corporate sponsor why they contribute to this solemn service. Ask those who travel from near and far to attend this service. They may all articulate their reasons differently, but each of their messages will share one underlining theme — it is all about the "white chairs."

Each one of those "white chairs" represents a hero who has fallen, and equally as important, heroes who must carry on. Their lives have been forever changed and through the efforts of so many, they know they are not alone, for we never forget our fallen and the contributions they and their families have made and will continue to make. We will never let them walk alone.

When the days grow long, the temperature rises and the site-preparation work seems endless, remember ... it's all about the "white chairs."

When you are running or cycling to the memorial in honor of our fallen, remember ... it's all about the "white chairs."

When you arrive at the service and can't get the view of the stage you would like, remember ... it's all about the "white chairs."

When there isn't enough seating to accommodate the more than 30,000 attendees, remember ... it's all about the "white chairs."

When the services extend longer than expected because the president of the United States takes time to ask survivors to tell him about their loved ones, remember ... it's all about the "white chairs."

When egos get bruised and tempers flare because the task seems overwhelming and thankless at times, remember ... it's all about the "white chairs."

When participating in the evening parties and gatherings to celebrate life, remember ... it's all about the "white chairs."

As long as there is a need for "white chairs" to be set up on the lawn of our nation's Capitol on May 15 to remember and honor our fallen, our work is not done.

Nor should we lose sight of the reason we do what we must all do — which is to remember and honor. Take pride in your efforts, for the FOP National Peace Officers' Memorial Service doesn't just happen, it evolves out of our respect and admiration for those who have given far more than we have.

We must never let them walk alone! **FOP**

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK VIDEO

In honor of National Police Week, the FOP has created a special video presentation of "It's All About the White Chairs," narrated by President Patrick Yoes. Watch the video on the FOP's YouTube channel at tinyurl.com/bde9rwnd.





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A Return to Broken Windows?

// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact Joe Gamaldi at jgamaldi@hpou.org.

It is not a shock to anyone who has been paying attention that we have a serious problem with crime in America. Sixteen cities across the U.S. experienced their highest murder rate in their recorded history in 2021, and nationwide, the murder rate was the highest in 25 years. Compound that with 2021 being the deadliest year for law enforcement for intentional homicides in over 20 years, and it's pretty clear we need to right this ship quickly. If you have watched any number of the hundreds of interviews the National FOP has done on this unprecedented crime wave, we have not just sounded the alarm, we have provided solutions. It is very clear that we need to restore the rule of law, vehemently prosecute violent crime, embrace the broken windows theory and support the brave men and women of law enforcement. It appears people are listening to us.

The NYPD recently announced that it will be returning to the practices of the broken windows theory and the strategy that delivered historic crime reductions in the 20 or so years prior to this massive crime spike. The department is going to target quality-of-life crimes, vandalism, theft, turnstile jumping, etc., in the hopes this will restore some semblance of a quality of life for the community and stop criminals before they escalate to more violent crimes. I certainly applaud the NYPD for taking this step and being willing to push back on the activists who claim broken windows doesn't work and only seeks to incarcerate individuals — when, in reality, it is setting a standard for the community and the rules and laws that we should all abide by in order to have a civilized society.

Of course, the wild card in all of this and why I have apprehension is police officers and our enforcement of the law is only one cog in the criminal justice machine. We can crack down all we want and we can increase



Our communities are waking up, and they are sick and tired of the rampant crime and disorder in our streets.

overtime patrols in high-crime areas to arrest more criminals, but if the DAs and judges refuse to prosecute cases, dismiss cases, give pinky promise PR bonds and no jail time over and over again, this enhanced enforcement will not work the way it is intended. It will essentially be us mopping the floor while the pipe is still gushing water. All these components of the criminal justice system need to be working together in order for us to have any hope of reducing crime

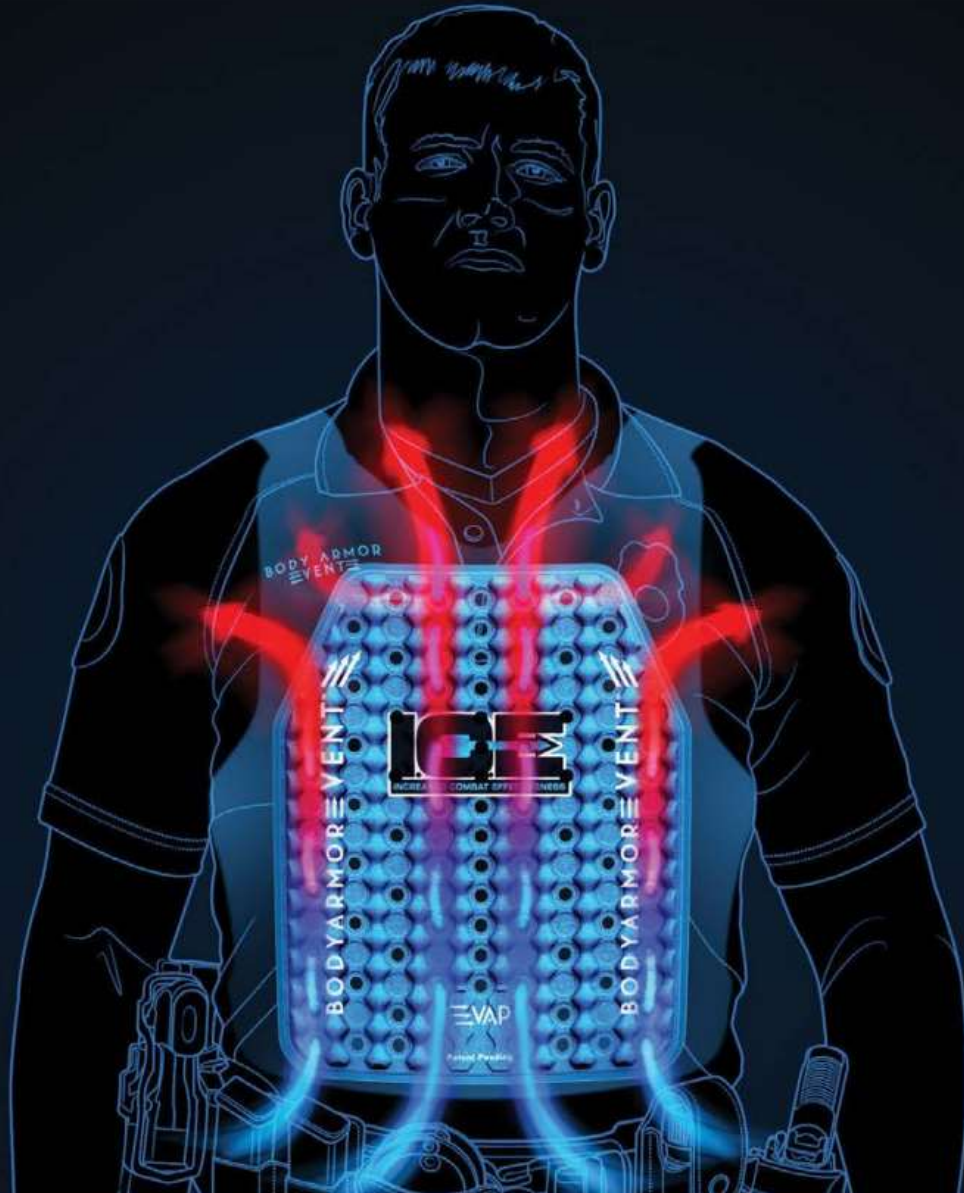
and providing some semblance of peace for our communities. Mark my words, if the DAs and judges will not get on board with the increased enforcement, and if there is no reduction in crime, academics who sit snug and safe behind their desks will scream, "See? Broken windows doesn't work," with no regard that we were left hung out to dry by our "partners" in the criminal justice system.

It is not all doom and gloom, folks, I truly believe this declaration of a return to broken windows is a positive step, one we are seeing in other cities across the country as they grapple with the violent crime crisis. Our communities are waking up, and they are sick and tired of the rampant crime and disorder in our streets. Time will tell if everyone will get on board, but one thing is clear, the Fraternal Order of Police is driving the national conversation about crime in our country — and everyone is listening!

As always, be safe out there, and if you need anything, I am only a phone call, text, email, or Facebook or Twitter direct message (@JoeGamaldi) away — or contact me on our free National FOP mobile app. **FOP**

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Brother and sisters, I hope this month's *Journal* finds you and your families well. We have faced so much adversity over the past few years, and yes, we are still standing. This is a testament to our unity with each other and our commitment of being FOP strong. Let us keep our resilience as we face adversity in the coming months.

This is the third and final article I have written for the May edition of the *Journal*. I discarded the first two because of a reflection I recently experienced. The first article I wrote detailed the recent National Board of Trustees meeting held in Philadelphia. I was going to share the business that was conducted and spotlight the trustees' approval of allowing the Executive Board to move forward on a new membership data system. I will share that information in a future edition, and know that we are busy finding a modern, top-notch system.

The second article I wrote dealt with membership requirements, focusing on prerequisites and transfers. As your National secretary, I am responsible for many functions of the Order, some noticeably out front but mostly behind the scenes, including designing the annual membership card, vetting advertisements for the *Journal*, approving vouchers for daily office operations, conducting interviews of prospective employees at the National Headquarters, receiving all funds due to the NFOP and preparing the reports for the conference and Board meetings. My office stays busy. The absolute most important functions that I perform are membership tracking and per



capita collection. I am grateful to my wonderful staff for the stellar job they do for us all. I will also share with you my opinions on membership do's and don'ts in the future.

It was my honor and duty to recognize my brothers and sisters who were taken from us.

What I am focusing on this month is the remembrance of our fallen sisters and brothers. Just a few days ago, I traveled to my State Capitol in Tallahassee and participated in the honoring of 85 brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice. As I stood and listened to the names being announced, I watched the surviving mothers, fathers, spouses, siblings, children, friends and colleagues try

to hold back tears. I experienced their grief. The feeling of sadness was around me. The feelings of love and strength were overwhelming. The feeling of comradery was stronger than ever.

As the past president of Jacksonville Lodge 5-30, I presided over our local memorial service for five years. As the Florida State Lodge president, I did my duty four times. It was the one official act that I did not look forward to. Not because I didn't want to see and embrace the relatives of my fallen brothers and sisters, but because I didn't look forward to feeling the anger over the loss of my friends and seeing the hurt from the surviving families, especially the children. However, presiding over the service was the highest honor bestowed on me and I embraced it with distinction.

As we all know, the National Peace Officers' Memorial Service was canceled in May 2020 and 2021 due to COVID restrictions on social interactions in Washington, D.C. We were, however, finally able to

Continued on page 20 >

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SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

Continued from page 18 >

have the traditional in-person service on October 16, 2021, where 434 officers were honored for 2019–2021. It was the largest memorial service to date. As preparations were being made for the Saturday noon service, your National Executive Board was busy fine-tuning the agenda and reviewing details to ensure every aspect of the program was centered on remembrance and dignity. Our National president, Pat Yoes, issued our assignments and had us review his speech. The president of the United States, Joe Biden, confirmed his attendance as the keynote speaker. This necessitated that your Executive Board be COVID tested less than 24 hours prior to the event since we would be in close proximity to the president. Shortly after we received the test results, the most unfortunate event happened. Our president, Pat, tested positive. He was asymptomatic, however, based on security protocols, he was prohibited from participating in the service. We were distraught over this change in our planning. We were looking forward to Pat making the dais introductions, introducing the president of the United States, making his address to the survivors and being the master of ceremony for the service.

Our president showed exemplary leadership. He confided his disappointment in not being able to participate and reminded us that we must take the lead in making the service a success. He turned to me and asked me to make the introductions of the dignitaries on the dais and perform the emcee duties at the podium. He turned to our treasurer, James Smallwood, and told him to give his welcome message to the survivors. He instructed Second Vice President Steve Weiler, Sergeant at Arms Keith Turney and National Trustees Chairman Rob Pride to handle the coordination of the Honor Guards, photographs, fellow trustees and security. We took our assignments and went to work.

I share this story with you because, just as I mentioned earlier in this article, I did not look forward to doing this task ... but it was my honor. It was my honor and duty to recognize my brothers and sisters who were taken from us. It was my honor to act as the presiding officer over the program. It was my duty to follow President Pat's request. It was the highest honor I have ever received.

Please watch the YouTube video in President Yoes' article "It's All About the White Chairs." I am sure you will agree it explains it all. I will see you at the 41st National Peace Officers' Memorial Service. Be safe. **FOP**



Support the NFOP PAC!

We need your support of the National Fraternal Order of Police Political Action Committee (NFOP PAC), which, like our grassroots activism, is an essential part of our National Legislative Program. The NFOP PAC allows us to support candidates who support our members and our profession. As the oldest and largest law enforcement labor organization in the United States, it is crucial we keep our PAC strong, so we can help the candidates who not only support our members but the entire law enforcement community. It is up to us to ensure that they get elected!

We need to increase member participation in our payroll deduction and monthly recurring credit card programs. Please help us advocate on your behalf and do so with the resources needed to be effective. Help us grow our PAC and amplify our voice in the nation's capitol.

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Updates From Philadelphia

// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact Steve Weiler at (267) 249-1486, or sweiler@fop5.org.

Brothers and sisters, I am completing this article just as the National Fraternal Order of Police wraps up our recent spring Board meeting that was held here in my home base of Philadelphia. It was good to see the many faces and personalities that represent the diversity of our nation and the membership that composes the National FOP. I hope that all of you enjoyed your time here in our city as we made every effort to make your stay here as comfortable as possible. My personal thanks goes to the staff and volunteers here at Philadelphia Lodge #5 for making this event an almost flawless display of our warmth and hospitality to the National Board and trustees as they attended to the business of the National Lodge.

Lack of Manpower and Hiring Issues

It is obvious that the lack of manpower and hiring issues continue to plague numerous police departments around the country. As a result of the disastrous nationwide "defund the police" movement, departments have been hard-pressed to lure qualified men and women to this noble profession. When you add into that the progressive prosecutors and municipal and state elected officials, you get a recipe for disaster. Here in Philadelphia, we not only have a set of progressive elected officials, but also an extremist for a local prosecutor. His policies are detrimental to both the hiring of new recruits and the safety of all Philadelphians. Who wants a job when the probability of a police officer being arrested

is far greater than that of a murderer? That is what we are facing here. When you add the recent change to prior residency to even apply for this job, it is another recipe for disaster. Fortunately, through the efforts of our local lodge president, John McNesby, we have been able to get this ridiculous prior residency rule suspended for new hires as police officers. Not only were we prohibited from hiring existing police officers from around the Commonwealth, but the reverse was also happening. We started to lose people who had two to three years on the force to surrounding suburban departments due to frequent attacks on residency and the political climate of being an officer in Philadelphia.

Congressional Board of Bravery Committee

As the National second vice president, one of my duties is to review the many submissions for recognition by the National Board for incidents of high valor and courage from around the country. This is a time-consuming yet rewarding task to undertake. In every submission I reviewed recently, I was astounded by the extreme bravery of the individual members who had placed themselves in direct danger in the face of a violent foe, all to save either one person or many from the wrath of a lawless individual. Incredibly, other individual members, sometimes alone and other times with associates, had acted with a total disregard for their personal safety while at the scene of a natural disaster or an evolving traffic calamity, all to save just one person or many. When I read these things, I was humbled and proud. It was a difficult task to score these individual acts, and I hope that I accorded them with the right evaluation. But rest assured, I can tell you that we have some brave people out there who are ready to lay everything on the line, and some actually did so. I am proud and grateful to all of these fine people for their service. **FOP**

LET YOUR VOICE
BE HEARD!

The FOP constantly endeavors to hear about the experiences of our members, so that we can understand how best to serve you.

The FOP was selected to partner with the Department of Justice to build standardized training in law enforcement peer support. Share your thoughts with us on how this training can best help our profession at surveymonkey.com/r/PowerInPeers.

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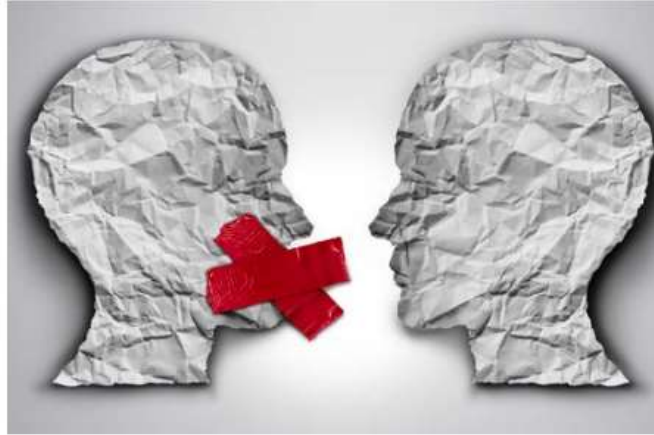
// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact Keith Turnery at kturney@fop.org.

We have definitely faced some challenges over the last couple of years. As Brother Rob Pride has often stated, they threw everything that they could at us and yet “**here we stand.**” Police reform, social unrest, COVID, vaccine mandates, the list goes on and on. We have definitely overcome adversity and often worked with our critics and adversaries alike to craft logical solutions to today’s issues facing the criminal justice system.

Now, however, is not the time to celebrate our survival because there is another wave of anti-police rhetoric on the horizon. This one is an attack on the influence law enforcement has in the political arena.

The next targeted attack on law enforcement is the assault on our associations, unions and our related lobbying efforts. I guess it’s part of the cancel culture that we all too often hear about. If you can’t beat them, then simply eliminate them from the conversation. One would think this is crazy! We who work in law enforcement have the same rights as anyone else to free speech and peaceful assembly, as well as the right to organize. Right? One would think so, one would hope so, yet I have been hearing and seeing things that speak to the contrary.

There are those who believe that we possess too much power and influence in the political arena. In a recent publication of the *Minnesota Law Review*, the following was stated in an essay by Zoe Robinson and Stephen Rushin: “The most powerful means to ratchet down the power of the law enforcement lobby is to impose restrictions on their activity, narrow collective bargaining rights, limiting access to legislators, and/or requiring greater transparency around



interactions between legislators and lobbyists.” In addition, “Another way to somewhat constrain the power of the law enforcement lobby within local politics is to limit the ability of law enforcement unions to negotiate over disciplinary matters as part of the collective bargaining process.”

**Now that criminal
justice reform advocates
are losing the battle,
their only recourse is to
try to silence our voices.**

Wow! What happened to open debate and the right of citizens (yes, we are citizens) to participate in the political process?! The essay goes on to suggest that we spend exorbitant amounts of money on political campaigns, and we somehow have some sort of special influence over politicians. Don’t we wish this were all true! Anyone who has worked in a leadership

position in a law enforcement association or union will tell you how difficult it is to get membership to contribute to a PAC fund or even be interested in politics. It has only been recently that any interest in politics has been garnered among the law enforcement community and only as a direct result of the attacks upon our profession.

The argument that we have some sort of special influence is equally ridiculous. Perhaps we

simply make logical arguments based on our experiences working within the criminal justice system that are ultimately believable. Remember when the defund movement was raging across America? Remember the attacks on qualified immunity in Colorado and other places? We told our political leaders that their intentions to defund and dismantle law enforcement would result in chaos, but no one was listening. Then the murder rates spiked, and criminals practiced their trade with impunity, openly looting businesses and carjacking innocent citizens. All of a sudden, the politicians, now getting beat up by their constituency, have come to us for our insights into these problems.

I think we all see that the pendulum is swinging back. As it does, those who advocated for radical criminal justice reform are seeing their hopes and dreams shattered by the logical arguments that we have been making throughout this failed experiment. Now that they are losing the battle, their only recourse is to try to silence our voices. This will surely be our next battleground. Be vigilant, as this will be the next wave of assault on our profession.

God bless you all, and God bless the FOP. **FOP**

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Affordable Health Care for FOP Members



// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact Rob Pride at lodge52pride@gmail.com.

Affordable health care. This is something many of us in this profession think about and do our best to plan for throughout our careers and when preparing for retirement. For many of our members, retirement health care is not a benefit afforded to them by their employer, so they are left constantly searching for a way to bridge the gap between the time they want to retire and the time they are eligible for Medicare, or they decide to work longer so that there is less of a gap in coverage to manage. Additionally, the health-care benefits provided by employers are constantly

diminishing while the cost to the employees is consistently on the rise. Across the country, we see our lodges engaged in ongoing fights to preserve benefits when employers are trying to recover from their economic shortfalls.

We've begun seeking solutions to these problems for our FOP members, starting with the Aetna Medicare Advantage program. This is a fantastic program for our members who are Medicare-eligible that provides affordable benefits in that realm. But due to COVID and other impactful events over the past two years, we've not seen the enrollment in this

program that we'd hoped for in order to have Aetna underwrite a pre-65 health-care plan. The Aetna program will stay in place, but we feel that more needs to be done for our pre-65 members, and we are moving forward in that endeavor.

At the recent Board meeting in Philadelphia, the National FOP Board of Trustees voted unanimously for your Executive Board and various committees to begin researching the possibility of establishing a 501(c)(9) NFOP Health Care Trust. Already, our legal counsel has provided the basic filing guidelines and strategy for navigating the legal hurdles of this endeavor. Members of the Executive Board have already met with local and State FOP leaders as well as other labor entities who have already established health-care trusts for their lodges and regions, and we have more of these meetings scheduled soon. These are groups who are willing to share with us their experiences, what has gone right for them as well as pitfalls to avoid. Our hope is that by establishing this program, it will not only provide an affordable health-care option but also be a natural "feeder" into the FOP Aetna Medicare Advantage program.

I am confident from speaking with leaders and experts in this field from across the country that we will be able to find an effective model for providing an affordable health-care option for all our members and their families. This will no doubt be yet another great benefit to being an FOP member and staying **FOP strong!** Stay connected with the National trustee in your state for more information as we navigate this process and work toward this goal. **FOP**

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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Scottie DeLashmit

JIMMY HOLDERFIELD / NATIONAL SECRETARY
SCOTTIE DeLASHMIT / TENNESSEE STATE LODGE
PRESIDENT

The May Member Spotlight features Brother Scottie DeLashmit, president of the Tennessee State Lodge. On any given day when the Tennessee State Legislature is in session, we are sure to find President Scottie walking the halls and meeting with the lawmakers on both sides of the aisle to advocate for his brothers and sisters. I am impressed with his personal relationship with Governor Bill Lee.

President DeLashmit has mastered the skills of balancing no-nonsense actions with fraternalism. He demonstrates his proficiency in presiding over the meetings of the State Lodge, yet he is one of the first to respond to a member in need. We asked Brother Scottie to share his experiences with our members. Here is his story.

Scottie DeLashmit currently serves as the court administrator for the General Sessions and Juvenile Courts of Tipton County, Tennessee. Prior to this position, he served for 15 years with the Tipton County Sheriff's Office as a detective. Scottie joined the Robert P. White FOP Lodge #27 in 1995.

He helped establish and charter the local lodge in Tipton County in 1997. Scottie has served in various leadership positions within his local lodge to include chaplain, secretary, treasurer, vice president and president. He is currently serving in his second two-year term as president of the Tennessee State Lodge. He joined the State board in 2010, serving as second vice president before moving to vice president for two terms. He is a 27-year member of the FOP.

When asked what he thought was one of his most memorable events related to the FOP, he answered, "There are several things that I hold close to my heart when it comes to the FOP. They are the National Conference in Nashville, the fraternal side of helping each other and responding to a natural disaster with DART to Thibodaux, Louisiana. With that being said, there is one event that is the most satisfying and humbling to me in my entire history with the FOP. Last October,



we were finally able to have a national memorial service for our fallen officers. Tennessee's National trustee was unable to assist in this ceremony due to prior family obligations and I was asked to take his place and assist in presenting medals to the families of the fallen officers. Without a doubt, meeting those families, seeing their faces and hearing their stories was the most humbling and fulfilling thing I have had the honor of being a part of with the FOP."

Brother Scottie further notes the fraternal side of the FOP and the importance of camaraderie between members. "The FOP is important in that officers usually don't open up and talk with anyone not associated with law enforcement. We are a tight group, and the brotherhood and sisterhood of the FOP allows members to speak with fellow officers and vent to each other. It is actually good for our mental health to have open and honest communication with others who have similar events in their lives," he explains. "The FOP is by far the largest



Continued on page 30 >

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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 28 >

member-driven organization that fights for the rights of its members. It is also the most widely known group and has the largest digital footprint, which is becoming more important in the technological world we are living in today. The conferences allow us to mingle with people from across our nation and talk about issues, both good and bad, we are seeing in our parts of the country and, after a while, we see that there are trends throughout the nation.”

As one of the leading voices representing law enforcement in Tennessee, Brother Scottie makes it a point to make the FOP’s presence known in the State Legislature to safeguard the rights of peace officers. “In Tennessee, we are watching our Legislature closely, trying to get good bills passed for our members while aggressively working to defeat bills that are harmful to our membership,” he says. “Thanks to grassroots campaigning by our members, we have enjoyed several victories over the past two years, ensuring our members’ voices are heard on our Capitol Hill in Nashville. We will continue to fight for our members.”

Earlier this year, legislation was introduced that would amend Tennessee state law and designate “a person who has been issued an enhanced handgun carry permit” as a member of law enforcement. Brother Scottie was a prominent voice speaking out against the legislation. “This particular bill stirred up a stink and received media attention from various national news outlets. I spoke with ABC, Fox and *The Washington Post* about this bill, and I had one main comment, ‘While we support and hold dear the Second Amendment, we have a problem with anyone not properly trained being called law enforcement,’” he shares. “After many phone calls, emails and visits to our members of the House and Senate by our members and their families, the originator of the bill in the House pulled this bill off notice. We will see if it comes back up next year. We are not opposed to adding areas where permit holders are allowed to legally carry their firearm, but we are opposed to expanding the definition of law enforcement to include the general public.”

When asked what message he’d like to impart to the next generation of FOP members, Brother Scottie says, “I would like to see more of our young members become involved in the daily operations of



our organization, as they are our future. It is tough to balance family time, work and the FOP, but it can be done. We are the leading voice for law enforcement, and I pray we will continue to be that voice of reason to the public and politicians. I encourage everyone to get involved in your local lodge and help grow your lodge. If we all work together, it is not too much on any one brother or sister.”

Throughout his 27 years as an FOP member, Brother Scottie has been more than involved and engaged. Here, he reflects on his role as state president and his time in the FOP: “I am currently serving in my fourth year as the Tennessee State president. I have had the honor of swearing in numerous local lodge leaders and attending many social events across the state. I enjoy meeting brothers and sisters and seeing all parts of our beautiful state,” he notes. “I have also attended too many funerals for officers killed, and spoken with too many widows and children of fallen officers. While it is difficult to meet with the families, as mere words cannot fill the void in their hearts, it is the right thing to do to show up and support our family members during their tragedy. It is easy to have fun together, but we find out what we are made of when we deal with death. I feel as though it is my duty to meet the needs of our members or



assist them in finding someone who can help them. I work for the membership.”

For new members who want to contribute to the success of the FOP, he has this advice to offer: “Become active and help your lodge. We are all different and each of us have different strengths. Use

your strengths to help the FOP and recognize our weaknesses. Know your limits. There is probably a brother or sister in your local lodge who is strong in an area you are not strong in and will do a great job to benefit us all.” **FOP**



FLORIDA

A Commitment to Honoring Our Fallen Brothers and Sisters

DAVID L. STEVENS / FLORIDA NATIONAL TRUSTEE

When an officer falls in the line of duty, the days and weeks that follow are a blur for the families of those heroes. They don't remember much during that extremely difficult time, but one of the things every family remembers is the Honor Guard and the service they perform.

Officer Ivan Pena is a shining example of the men and women who serve these duties, and he has always taken great pride in representing the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (JSO) in a professional manner. Pena retired from the JSO in 2018 after 25 years of exemplary service, and 22 of those years he was a member of the JSO Honor Guard.

During his career, Pena participated in numerous Honor Guard competitions as part of an eight-member team led by Lieutenant Jerry Coxen, and they participated in their first competition in Orlando in the summer of 2001. JSO won first place in seven different categories! When the team from JSO returned to Jacksonville, Lieutenant Coxen and his lead trainer, Pena, immediately added 25 pages to the agency's drill manual, which included manual of arms with the M1 Garand rifles, and then later transitioning to the shotguns, which are still used today.

In May 2005, the JSO Honor Guard, with Pena as the team lead, finished second out of 22 teams in the Honor Guard competition. The team that finished first had six of eight members who were former Army Old Guards at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

In 2006, Pena began making the retiree, active-duty and line-of-duty death notifications for the agency. Even though Pena is retired, he still makes those notifications to me so that I can inform retired officers of brothers and sisters who have died.

In 2006, Pena took a more active role in the Jacksonville



Officer Ivan Pena

Police Memorial Ceremony and was responsible for its recent venue change from the Police Memorial Building to the Veterans Memorial Arena, where a beautiful police memorial is located. Pena took on many other duties in 2006 as well when his responsibilities included becoming the equipment supply officer and travel arrangement officer and organizing and arranging funerals and ceremonies for the Honor Guard.

In 2008, Pena became the Florida State Honor Guard commander (replacing former Captain Dennis Lemma, current sheriff of Seminole County). Pena also serves on the State Police Memorial Committee and plays an active role in service

preparation and "timeline" for the memorial service.

After retiring from the JSO in 2018, Pena was asked by the undersheriff to continue his duties with the Honor Guard as a logistics/training officer and to provide assistance with funeral notifications. Pena was allowed to proudly wear his JSO uniform as he represented our agency at local, state and national functions.

Pena is stepping down as the lead on the state level (he will continue to serve on Police Memorial Committee), and to say that his leadership and professionalism will be missed is an understatement.

Officer Ivan Pena, you have served us well and your impact will be felt for generations. **FOP**

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NEW MEXICO Deputy Honored by the Professional Bull Riders

After a suspect shot and killed New Mexico State Police Officer Darian Jarrott during a traffic stop near Deming on February 4, 2021, Deputy Diego Herrera engaged the suspect, killing him several miles away from where Jarrott lost his life. In the process, Herrera, who serves with the Doña Ana County Sheriff's Office, took actions that saved the life of Las Cruces Police Officer Adrian De La Garza, who had also engaged in a fire fight with the suspect and was wounded after being shot.

The Professional Bull Riders (PBR) honored Herrera in front of a sold-out crowd in Albuquerque during its bull-riding competition on March 26. New Mexico FOP State President Robert Parra and National Trustee James Flores were on stage with Herrera during the presentation. **FOP**



NM FOP President Robert Parra, Deputy Diego Herrera and NM National Trustee James Flores before the presentation



NM National Trustee James Flores, Deputy Diego Herrera, NM FOP President Robert Parra and FOX 59 (Indianapolis) news anchor Fanchon Stinger on stage during the recognition ceremony



Fanchon Stinger, Deputy Diego Herrera, NM FOP President Robert Parra and NM National Trustee James Flores sitting behind the announcer's booth



BENEFITS OF FOP MEMBERSHIP

The Fraternal Order of Police is the world's largest organization of sworn law enforcement officers, with over 325,000 members in more than 2,100 lodges. We are committed to improving the working conditions of officers and the safety of those we serve through education, legislation, information, community involvement and employee representation. Here's a quick overview of the wide variety of services and benefits that the FOP offers to its members.

Legislative Office

The office on Capitol Hill lobbies on issues important to rank-and-file law enforcement officers. The National Legislative Program is the most active and comprehensive of any law enforcement organization in Washington.

Legal Defense Plan

This self-funded plan is available to eligible FOP groups and individual members to cover law enforcement exposures, including administrative, civil and criminal legal coverage; H.R. 218 coverage; and the Moonlighting Liability Insurance Program.

Labor Services Division

Comprehensive resources and services designed to ensure that no officer goes to the bargaining table alone. Labor Services stands ready to provide the people and resources you need for contract information, experienced legal experts, training seminars, personalized labor research and more.

National Peace Officers' Memorial Service

This solemn event is held every year during National Police Week to honor those who have given their lives in the line of duty. Open to the public, it brings together the expanded law enforcement family and national leaders, pays tribute to the fallen and offers words of comfort to their surviving family members.

FOP Journal

Published digitally 12 times a year, the *FOP Journal* is the official publication of the Grand Lodge. Each issue contains reports from the Executive Board, updates on law enforcement legal and labor issues and so much more!

Disaster Relief

As part of the NFOP Foundation, the Fraternal Order of Police Disaster Relief Fund (a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization) relies on the generosity of individuals, organizations and corporations and is always prepared to assist our members in distress.

Charity Partnerships

- **Easter Seals:** Helping children and adults with disabilities live better lives is at the heart of Easter Seals' mission, and the FOP, as a long-standing Easter Seals National Corporate Partner, has helped raise more than \$15 million. Donate online at www.easterseals.com and be sure to indicate your FOP affiliation when donating!
- **Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics:** The FOP is committed to helping people with intellectual disabilities learn to become self-reliant and contributing members of our communities.

Service Providers

The National FOP list of Service Providers currently includes Liberty Mutual insurance, Avis and Enterprise car rentals and a variety of licensed products from HALO, the official FOP merchandiser.

Education Services

The Education Services Committee develops and implements professional law enforcement training programs and events to equip members with the skills needed to enhance their careers, and has established a training schedule covering a wide spectrum of leadership, labor and legal issues. The Grand Lodge also provides scholarships to eligible applicants.

National Fraternal Order of Police University (NFOPU)

Recognizing that four-year and graduate degrees are increasingly important for law enforcement career advancement, the FOP collaborates with a select consortium of universities willing to offer members the education they need with a flexible schedule and reasonable cost. **FOP**



For more information on all of these programs, visit www.fop.net.

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POLICE WEEK 2022



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Willie E. Hall
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Harry M. Hutchinson Jr.
Maurice J. Jackson
Madison Nicholson
James N. Risner
Randall V. Smith*
William H. Smith Jr.
Jason L. Vice

ARIZONA

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Jeremy A. Brinton
Lyndon T. Britt
Bryan R. Brown*
Alicia D. Carter
Christopher A. Farrar
Kevin J. Fletcher*
Mathew A. Heffer
Joseph H. Montgomery
Miroslaw Mroczkowski*
Ginarro A. New

Michael D. Rudd
Juan M. Ruiz
Kendall L. Thomas

ARKANSAS

Kevin D. Apple
Christopher W. Cummins
Hasain El-Amin
James R. Gardner
Lesley S. Green
Danny J. Guynes
Scott A. Hutton*
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Jose L. Anzora
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Luca P. Benedetti
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Phillip J. Campas
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*The officer's death occurred in a previous year but the story of the officer's sacrifice was unknown until now.

| WELLNESS |

SOLUTIONS THAT WORK: BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE WELLNESS PROGRAM

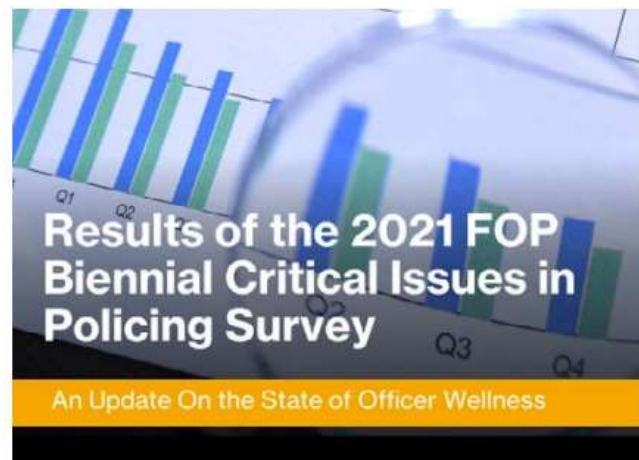
SHERRI MARTIN / DIRECTOR OF WELLNESS

With the increase in public awareness of the challenges to mental health faced by first responders, the availability of wellness resources has increased. The Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act of 2017 (LEMHWA) was signed into law in January 2018, recognizing that law enforcement agencies need and deserve support in their ongoing efforts to protect the mental health and well-being of their employees (U.S. Department of Justice, n.d.). This signaled acknowledgement from the federal government that good mental and psychological health is just as essential as good physical health for law enforcement officers to be effective in keeping our country and our communities safe from crime and violence. In fact, our very own FOP Division of Wellness Services was created in 2019, signaling that our profession had turned a corner with the largest organization of police officers in the country making officer wellness a permanent priority.

The National Officer Wellness Committee has always been keenly aware of the importance of developing wellness programs and solutions that make sense. We have long known that we can create all the wellness programs in the world, but if they won't be utilized by officers or if officers won't find them helpful, they won't be effective and won't bring about positive outcomes. With that understanding in

mind, the FOP Division of Wellness Services has made it a priority to engage in constant research, checking in with our members to ask about their perceptions and expectations of wellness services.

With the **2021 Biennial Critical Issues in Policing Survey**, we gathered information on the variety of wellness services being offered to members across the country. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we knew that the landscape of wellness services had changed somewhat, in some ways



negative, but in others, positive. As the world was forced to become more familiar with online communication, we suffered a decrease in the number of in-person wellness training courses, but webinars and other online wellness resources became more plentiful. In many cases, tapping into these resources allowed the consumer officer to retain anonymity, making it feel safer for officers to engage with wellness services. As stigma has decreased and mental health has become a topic of conversation across the globe, a plethora of services has begun to spring up. The federal government continues to expand the LEMHWA program, awarding more and more agencies with federal grants aimed at developing wellness programs for their personnel. Yet some agencies are further along with developing wellness programs and services than others, so availability of services remains widely varied.

Members were surveyed about their level of utilization of wellness services where available. The most widely available service remains employee assistance programs (EAPs) or similar agency-provided access to psychology specialists. The vast majority of police agencies in the United States have established EAPs, though we believe that still few employ counselors who are culturally competent and specially trained in working with law enforcement clients. This is an issue that the FOP Division of Wellness Services recognizes and is working to improve. The most utilized support mechanism among those surveyed were informal debriefings with managers or colleagues. If you think about it, we have all taken part in locker room discussions after shift or chatted in the roll call room about tough calls. Over half of the members surveyed have access to a range of other support services, including trained peer support, chaplaincy services, suicide awareness training and substance abuse programs, just to name a few.

When a Wellness Program Is Available, What Did Officers Actually Use?

In Figure 1 (above), all bars indicate availability of the particular service.

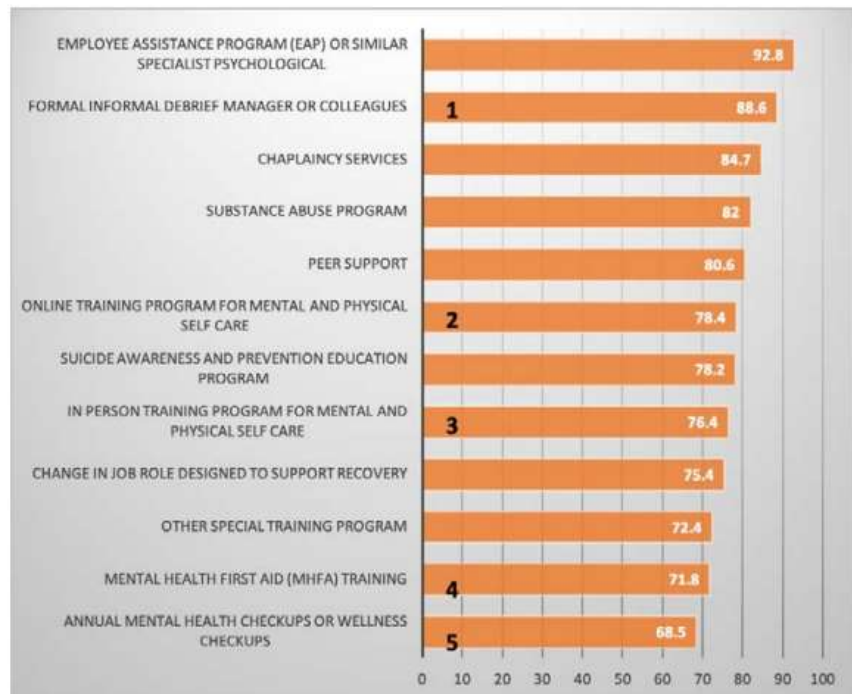


Figure 1

For example, we can see that over 90% of respondents have access to an EAP. The numbers 1–5 in bold indicate which services among those available were **actually utilized** most frequently. We can see that debriefs with managers and colleagues are reported as most

frequently accessed, followed by online wellness training programs.

Utilization of a particular wellness service does not necessarily equate to effective support for the officer,

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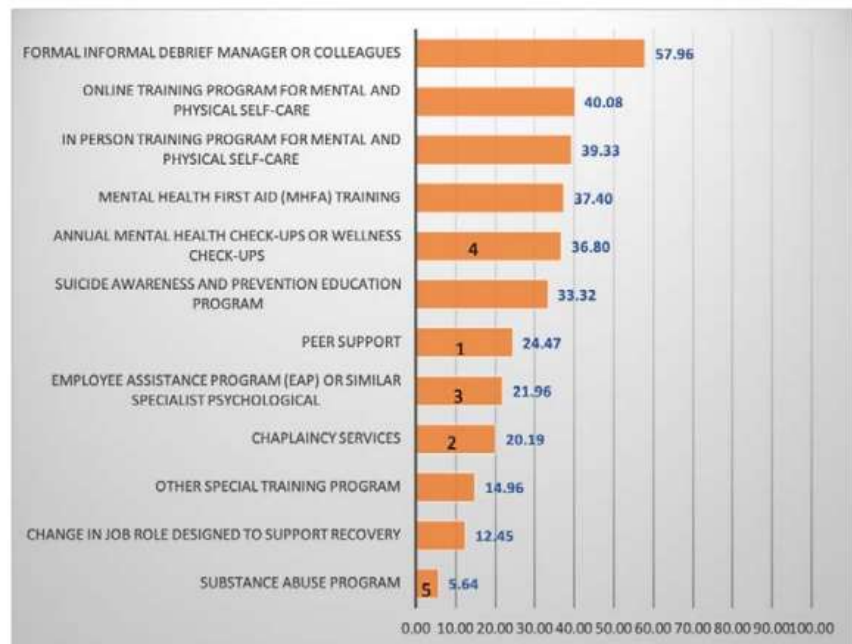


Figure 2

SOLUTIONS THAT WORK

Continued from page 41 >

however. Just as we must measure the quantity and type of support services offered, it is equally important to measure their effectiveness. While it is challenging to measure true effectiveness of a service in the way of improved outcomes for officers and their families, we can certainly measure the level of effectiveness or helpfulness of a service as perceived by the officer consumer. Among services available to officers across the nation, trained peer support remains most highly rated by officers for its effectiveness in providing helpful support. Chaplaincy services, although accessed slightly less frequently than peer support, are rated as the second most effective means of support by officers who have accessed the service.

Each law enforcement officer is a unique individual with unique needs. No two individuals will benefit at the same level from the same services.

When a Wellness Program Is Used by Officers, What Did They Find Most Effective?

In Figure 2 (previous page), bars indicate the percentage of respondents who had accessed the particular service available within the past year. Numbers 1–5 in bold within the bars indicate those services rated by respondents as the top five **most effective services**. In addition to peer support and chaplaincy services, EAPs, annual mental health and wellness checks, and substance abuse programs round out the top five most effective services as perceived by officers.

According to past research conducted by the FOP Division of

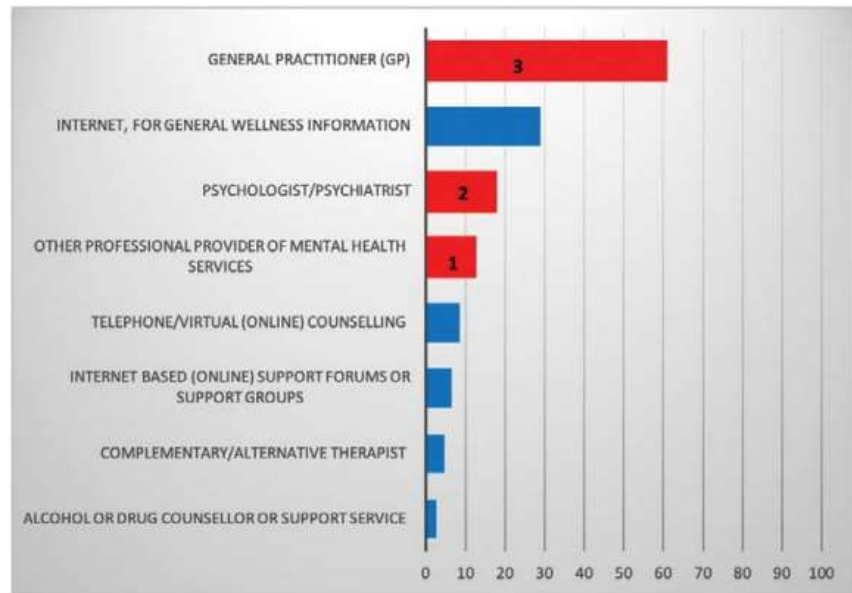


Figure 3

Wellness Services, we know that because of stigma that still remains around asking for help, some officers are still reluctant to use agency-provided services for fear or concern that the officer will suffer negative repercussions on the job. As such, some officers will be more inclined to utilize services provided by sources outside their department. For some whose agencies may not provide adequate wellness services, use of services external to their department may be their only option. It may come as no surprise that the most frequently accessed service external to agencies is the officer's general practitioner or family doctor. Approximately a third of respondents indicated that they had accessed wellness information via the internet, and some had visited a mental health professional outside their agency-provided EAP.

When an External Support Service or Program Is Used by Officers, What Did They Find Most Effective?

In Figure 3 (above), all bars indicate the percentage of respondents who accessed the particular service. For example, approximately 60% had visited their general practitioner. Bars in red indicate the three external services rated as **most effective** by respondents. So even though only

about 12–18% report utilizing the services of a mental health practitioner external to their agency-provided services, those who did rated this service the most effective. The expertise of mental health professionals can help!

As agencies look to develop new wellness programs or enhance existing ones, it is imperative that information provided in this research is considered. Each law enforcement officer is a unique individual with unique needs. No two individuals will benefit at the same level from the same services. Therefore, it is important to provide a variety of effective services, including access to culturally competent wellness professionals, trained peer supporters, printed and online wellness information, and wellness training programs. Providing wellness services should never be a “check box” item but should instead be considered an essential part of agency health, worthy of having time, personnel and funding dedicated to its development and implementation. **FOP**

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Privacy laws are in place to protect your health information. But if you have trouble hearing, understanding or you just want someone else to help manage your care, you can authorize a trusted caregiver or loved one to speak to your insurance carrier.

Grant Permission for a Loved One to Speak About Your Health Coverage

If your insurance is through Aetna, anytime you call us on the phone, you can verbally tell us that we may speak with another person who is with you at that time. However, you can make this permission last for one year when you authorize it in writing. Here's how:

1. **Download the Authorization for Release of Protected Health Information (PHI) permission form online.**
Visit FOP.AetnaMedicare.com and click on "Coverage & benefits" then "Plan benefits & Star Ratings." If you scroll down the page, there's a section called "Give someone permission to manage your care" where you'll find a drop-down menu with the PHI form.
2. **Complete the form and remember to sign it.** Note: If a legal representative is signing the form, or to make the permission permanent, you must provide legal documentation such as power of attorney, medical power of attorney or legal guardianship. Mail, fax or email the completed and signed form:
HIPAA Member Rights Team
P.O. Box 14079
Lexington, KY 40512-4079
Fax: (859) 280-1272
Email: HIPAAFulfillment@aetna.com

Resources for Caregivers

Aetna's Resources For Living is available to help Aetna Medicare Advantage medical plan members and their caregivers find the right services. Whether it's for help around the house, caregiver support, social activities or something else, we can help you find it. For example, looking for assisted living resources can be tricky. There's so much to consider:

residency vs. help during the day, certifications of the staff and center, general health of other residents and how much opportunity there may be to stay social.

Just call and tell us what you're looking for and our consultants will research and give you options. Use the phone number that's on your Aetna Medicare ID card. The call is available at no extra cost to you. You pay for any services you choose to use.

Plan for Your Future Care

For many, there comes a time when we can no longer speak for ourselves — especially when it comes to our medical care and treatment wishes. One way to ensure you get your way is to put it in writing **now**, while you can still speak for yourself. This is called "advance care planning."

The Aetna Compassionate Care program is available at no cost to all Aetna Medicare members. The program can help you with advance care planning. You can also access nurse case managers and an entire care support team. Visit the website to download advance care planning forms for your state, such as an advance directive, a living will, important contact list, important papers list and more.

If you want more information about these programs, call Aetna at **(866) 246-8039 (TTY: 711)**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET. Or go to FOP.AetnaMedicare.com. **FOP**

Editor's Note: The FOP is dedicated to helping all of its members and their families thrive and improve their standard of living. That's why the FOP has teamed up with Aetna to offer four Aetna Medicare Advantage PPO plan options that provide members with comprehensive medical, prescription, hearing and vision benefits. As part of this partnership, Aetna will be sharing helpful information about its plans, wellness-related news and more in each issue of the *FOP Journal*.



FOP VETTED AND APPROVED WELLNESS PROVIDERS AND PROGRAMS

Wellness Facilities

Chateau Recovery

Midway, UT

chateaurecovery.com/programs/first-responders

FHE Health: Shatterproof Program

Deerfield Beach, FL

fherehab.com/services/first-responders

First Responder Wellness by Simple Recovery

Costa Mesa, CA

firstresponder-wellness.com

Harbor of Grace First Responder Program

Havre de Grace, MD

harborofgracerecovery.com/first-responders

Transformations Treatment Center: Help for Our Heroes Program

Delray Beach, FL

helpforourheroes.com

Warrior's Heart

Bandera, TX

warriorsheart.com

Wellness Products

CordicoShield

cordico.com/shield

TIAG mResilience

tiag.net/innovations/mresilience

Lighthouse Health & Wellness

lighthousehw.org

Wellness Training Programs

HEART 9/11 SMART Program

heart911.org/programs/smart-program

Warrior PATHH

bouldercrest.org/warrior-pathh

Updates on the President's Budget Proposal and FOP-Backed Bills



Major Increases for State and Local Law Enforcement in FY23 Budget Proposal: Hiring Budget Highest in Years

The Biden administration released its budget proposal for the upcoming fiscal year late last month, which includes significant increases and investments in programs that support state and local law enforcement. The budget delivers on the president's commitment he made during the State of the Union to increase federal funding for the U.S. Department of Justice, its programs and component agencies.

The budget proposal includes \$20.6 billion for the U.S. Department of Justice's discretionary spending on federal law enforcement, crime prevention and intervention — an increase of more than \$2 billion. This includes:

- \$533.5 million for the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne-JAG) program
- \$10 million for officer training for officers responding to those with mental illness or disabilities
- \$40 million for the Project Safe Neighborhoods program to help state and local agencies combat gun crimes
- \$30 million for the Patrick J. Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) grant program

The proposal boosts the budget of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) to \$651 million, including \$537 million for the COPS Hiring Program. This is an increase of \$139 million for the COPS Office and the many programs it administers. In the last fiscal year's budget, the COPS Office received the largest budget increase request in recent years, and this proposal continues to build on funding for law enforcement.

Just the Facts:

» The president's proposed budget for fiscal year 2023 includes significant increases and investments in programs that support law enforcement nationwide. The FOP will be engaged in this budget cycle to ensure that public safety officers have access to the resources they need. There has also been progress on a number of FOP-backed bills, including the Better Cybercrime Metrics Act, which was passed by the House and is now awaiting the president's signature, and the Wally Bunker Healthcare Enhancement for Local Public Safety (HELPS) Retirees Improvement Act, which was recently introduced. This legislation would allow retired officers to receive relief on their annual tax returns for health-care insurance premiums.

These numbers will obviously fluctuate as congressional appropriators will be crafting their own budgets to guide the appropriations bills — a process that has, in fact, already begun. As always, the FOP will be very engaged in this budget cycle to make sure our men and women in blue have access to the resources they need to keep their communities and themselves safe.

Justice Department Revises Rules to Address "Ghost Guns"

Last month, the U.S. Department of Justice announced that it had submitted a final rule to the Federal Register that revises the definition of "firearm" to address the rising public safety threat of "ghost guns." State and local law enforcement recovered and reported 45,240 firearms that they suspected were privately made "ghost guns" — including 692 related to homicide or attempted homicide investigations.

The new regulation clarifies that firearms parts kits that are readily convertible to firearms are subject to the same regulations as traditional firearms. U.S. Attorney General Merrick B. Garland made this statement: "This rule will make it harder for criminals

and other prohibited persons to obtain untraceable guns, will help ensure that law enforcement officers can retrieve the information they need to solve crimes, and will help reduce the number of untraceable firearms flooding our communities. I commend all our colleagues at the ATF who have worked tirelessly over the past 12 months to get this important rule finalized, and to do it in a way that respects the rights of law-abiding Americans."

The rule goes into effect 120 days after publication.

FOP-Supported Cybercrime Bill Sent to President for Signature

The House passed S. 2629, the Better Cybercrime Metrics Act, this month and sent the bill to President Biden, who is expected to sign it into law.

Each year, hundreds of thousands of Americans are targeted in cybercrime-related incidents, falling victim to online criminals. There are an estimated 300,000 to 700,000 cybercrime victims each year, and these numbers are increasing. Unfortunately, because there

Continued on page 48 >

FOP JOURNAL // MAY 2022



We are Proud to Host
Police Vehicle Display and Shine
 Modern, Vintage & Tribute Vehicles



Sponsored By: **SEMPER**
 Uniforms & Equipment


May 14th, 2022
 1:00pm-4:00pm

Located at the
 U.S. Capitol Reflecting Pool
 To Register visit www.PoliceWeek.org

National Police Week Police Vehicle Display

The FOP is proud to be a sponsor of the National Police Week police vehicle display to be held on May 14 from 1 to 4 p.m. at the beautiful U.S. Capitol and Reflecting Pool. The event will feature vintage, modern and tribute police vehicles from all over the country. Vintage privately owned police cars have been meeting in Washington, D.C., for National Police Week since the 1990s and typically participate in the memorial march following the event, which will be held at 6 p.m. on May 14. This event is free and open to all police vehicles attending National Police Week. Register your vehicle today at policeweek.org.

THE NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT MUSEUM IS NOW OPEN!




POST 9/11

THE EVOLUTION OF AMERICAN LAW ENFORCEMENT

8.27.21 - 7.31.22

HONORARY CHAIR, COMMISSIONER DERMOT F. SHEA, NYPD



National Law Enforcement Memorial and Museum
 RESPECT. HONOR. REMEMBER.

To mark the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, the National Law Enforcement Museum will feature a new exhibit titled "Post 9/11: The Evolution of American Law Enforcement."

To learn more about the National Law Enforcement Museum, please visit tinyurl.com/hazwfmldr.

Top Priorities in Brief

H.R. 82/S. 1302, the Social Security Fairness Act

House: 269 co-sponsors (197 D, 72 R)

Senate: 39 co-sponsors (33 D, 4 R, 2 I)

Urge Congress to pass it:
tinyurl.com/yc84zf3m

H.R. 962/S. 1888, the Law Enforcement Officers' Equity Act

House: 93 co-sponsors (70 D, 23 R)

Senate: 3 co-sponsors (2 D, 1 R)

Urge Congress to pass it:
tinyurl.com/37afz34h

H.R. 3225, the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act

House: 32 co-sponsors (22 D, 10 R)

Urge Congress to pass it:
tinyurl.com/5h6mtmvt

H.R. 1210/S. 1610, the LEOSA Reform Act

House: 58 co-sponsors (1 D, 57 R)

Senate: 2 co-sponsors (2 R)

Urge Congress to pass it:
tinyurl.com/5e4m94rj

H.R. 3079/S. 774, the Protect and Serve Act

House: 73 co-sponsors (6 D, 67 R)

Senate: 23 co-sponsors (23 R)

Urge Congress to pass it:
tinyurl.com/mvursja

To see a full list of legislation supported by the FOP, please visit tinyurl.com/ycy5k5rv. Members should continue to monitor the FOP's social media platforms and our website for the latest legislative news! To send a message to your members of Congress asking them to support FOP priority legislation, visit the FOP Action Center at votervoice.net/FOP/home.

WASHINGTON REPORT

Continued from page 46 >

is no comprehensive data collection to record the scale and impact of cybercrimes in the United States, these estimates are likely much lower than the actual number of victims. This legislation would encourage local and federal law enforcement agencies to report cybercrimes to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Additionally, the FBI would be required to report cybercrime metrics and cyber-enabled crime categories similarly to how they report other types of property crimes.

Update: Bill Repealing "Direct Pay" Requirement for HELPS Retirees Act Introduced

In 2006, Congress enacted the Healthcare Enhancement for Local Public Safety (HELPS) Retirees Act, which provided a modest tax benefit to help retired public safety officers afford health insurance by allowing the use, on a pre-tax basis, of up to \$3,000 annually from their pension funds (including defined benefit plans and defined contribution plans) to pay for premiums on health care and long-term-care insurance. The FOP was proud to have played a leading role in developing this legislation, which was intended to help address the rising health-care costs faced by many of our retired members. Because of the physical demands of their profession, law enforcement and other public safety officers often retire earlier than other occupations. In fact, many local, state and federal agencies have mandatory retirement ages for their officers. In these instances, retired officers may lose their employer-provided health insurance upon or shortly after their retirement — a time when they are years away from being eligible for Medicare. This, coupled with the fact that law enforcement and other public safety officers face greater health-care needs than other professions because of the hazards they faced in the line of duty, forces them to spend a considerable amount of their limited income on health insurance premiums. Many retired public safety officers were able to take advantage of this benefit.

However, too many public safety officers were ineligible or lost their eligibility for this benefit because of the law's "direct pay" requirement. This means that the public pension

system must pay the health or long-term-care insurance company in order to exclude these payments from the employee's gross income. This legislation is named after Wally Bunker, a retired law enforcement officer and active FOP member who was unable to take the deduction for years because of the direct payment requirement. This legislation would remove this requirement and allow all retired public employees to take advantage of this benefit, which they earned through their service to our communities, and increase the pre-tax amount from \$3,000 to \$6,000 per year.

The bill, H.R. 7203, the Wally Bunker Healthcare Enhancement for Local Public Safety (HELPS) Retirees Improvement Act, was introduced by Representatives Steven J. Chabot (R-Ohio) and Abigail B. Spanberger (D-Va.).

The president's budget proposal includes \$20.6 billion for the U.S. DOJ's discretionary spending on federal law enforcement, crime prevention and intervention.

FOP Calls on House Committees to Advance FOP-Back Legislation

This month, the FOP urged the House Committees on the Judiciary and Financial Services to consider and favorably report H.R. 6943, the Public Safety Officer Support Act, and H.R. 3172, the Homes for Every Local Protector, Educator, and Responder (HELPER) Act.

The FOP worked with our friends and allies in Congress to develop H.R. 6943, which acknowledges the connection between suicide and service-connected mental health issues and amends the Public Safety Officers'

Benefit (PSOB) program by providing death and disability benefits to officers who attempt to take or do take their own life. We are hopeful that the Judiciary Committee will consider this bill this month.

In addition, the FOP called on the House Financial Services Committee to consider H.R. 3172, legislation that would establish a home loan benefits program for law enforcement officers, other first responders and educators based on a similar program for veterans administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The Federal Housing Administration Mortgage Insurance Program for eligible public employees would streamline eligibility, expand eligible areas, eliminate down payment requirements and eliminate a monthly insurance premium requirement. This will greatly expand the affordable housing options for law enforcement officers and their families. The Committee has not yet responded to the FOP's request.

Help Spread the Word!

We encourage all FOP members to check out our social media pages, as the daily posts inform not only our members on the current issues facing law enforcement, but the general public as well. With our social media outreach, we hope to better educate our audience on the current state of affairs for the brave men and women who suit up every day to serve and protect. We encourage every lodge, every member and every citizen who supports law enforcement officers to follow the National FOP:

- **Facebook (@GLFOP)**
- **Twitter (@GLFOP)**
- **Instagram (@FOPnational)**

Do your part! We need your help to spread the truth and defend the police and our officers. We ask that everyone **share, comment** and **like** the content that we are posting.

Lastly, the National FOP's Weekly Update is a key resource to keep you informed on the legislation important to law enforcement and a great way to stay updated on what the National FOP is doing for you in Washington. If you have not yet done so, please be sure to sign up for the National FOP's *Washington Watch: Legislative Update*. This one-of-a-kind weekly update is sent out every Friday via email, posted in the

NFOP mobile app and shared on our social media platforms. To sign up to receive the update via email, please visit tinyurl.com/47k3ccpd.

Please Support the PAC!

Our National Legislative Program is the most reliable, effective and impactful law enforcement advocacy operation in Washington, D.C. When Congress or an administration, regardless of party, is looking to engage meaningfully on criminal justice or law enforcement issues, they seek out the FOP as a partner. We are known and trusted to fight for the interests of our members, which makes the FOP a vital ally on policing and criminal justice issues.

As we move into this election year, the National Fraternal Order of Police Political Action Committee (NFOP PAC) is a critical component of our advocacy program. By supporting candidates who support our members and our profession, it can be a very effective way to represent our members on Capitol Hill. Given the importance of the PAC, it is vital that the PAC is as well-funded as possible. However, as of this writing, our PAC is very much depleted from the previous election cycle. We need our members to step up and contribute to help us ensure that the next Congress will continue to have members who will fight for them. One association in particular, the Long Beach Police Officers Association, raises over \$1,000 per month for the PAC. And this is just one association! If lodges nationwide were to follow their lead, the NFOP PAC would have the resources it needs to make a nationwide impact.

We are asking all FOP members to find a way to contribute to the National FOP PAC. Our profession depends on having well-informed lawmakers who listen and understand the challenges facing law enforcement today.

We can accept one-time donations, but we encourage members to sign up for recurring, monthly contributions using their credit card. This is the most effective and reliable way to contribute.

These contributions need not be for hundreds or thousands of dollars (though these are also very much appreciated) — but every dollar helps! If every FOP member gave just \$1, we could raise \$364,000! If 10% of



our members gave just \$5 this year, we would raise \$182,000 for the next election cycle. We can and need to do better raising funds for our PAC!

To donate online, please visit tinyurl.com/2p8ec7xf. If you would like to donate via check, please make it out to the National Fraternal Order of Police Political Action Committee and mail it to 328 Massachusetts Avenue NE, Washington, D.C., 20002. For inquiries about our effortless payroll deduction program or to sign up for our recurring monthly credit card donations, please contact the Government and Media Affairs Center at (202) 547-8189 or David Taboh at dtaboh@fop.net.

Thank you to all of you who have supported and continue to support our PAC with regular contributions!

Tune in to the Blue View Podcast!

More than 10 episodes of the FOP's weekly podcast, entitled the *Blue View*, are now available on the FOP's YouTube channel. Hosted by National President Patrick Yoes, the podcast features guests from Capitol Hill, from within the FOP, as well as law enforcement experts and leaders from around the country to gain insight into the issues and current events in the law enforcement community.

The *Blue View* podcast can be found on **Apple Podcasts**, **Spotify**, **Amazon Music** and **YouTube**. **FOP**



Keeping Your Estate Plan Healthy

Life happens, so even a well-thought-out estate plan needs to be revisited every few years to make sure that it is still accurate and reflects your intentions. Were there significant life changes since your estate plan was created? If the answer is yes, then you definitely need to update your estate plan to ensure it is current.

Marriage

It is possible that prior to marriage, parents or siblings are named as beneficiaries in wills, life insurance policies and retirement assets, such as a 401(k) or IRA. Once married, you should review your beneficiary designations in order to make changes where appropriate. Although the spouse automatically becomes the beneficiary of a 401(k) plan or other pension plan, it is helpful to complete new beneficiary forms designating the spouse as the new beneficiary. If the new spouse is not going to be the beneficiary of the 401(k) plan, it is imperative that the new spouse sign a waiver to this effect. Without the waiver, the new spouse will be the beneficiary upon death — even if it is your desire to have another family member be the beneficiary.

Divorce

If a divorce occurs and your former spouse is still the named beneficiary under your will, life insurance policies, 401(k) or other pension plan, it is possible that your former spouse will still inherit from you notwithstanding the divorce. For this reason, it is very important that forms changing the beneficiary and removing the former spouse are completed as soon as the divorce decree is final.

However, some states have adopted revocation-on-divorce statutes, which

Just the Facts:

>> It is essential to review your estate plan periodically to ensure that your loved ones are taken care of in the best manner possible and in the way you intended. In addition to regular reviews, it is recommended that you update your plan at major life events, such as marriage, divorce or the birth of a child.

provides that any right, power or benefit granted to the former spouse is revoked as a result of the divorce. Although it would be prudent not to rely on state law, it does offer relief from inadvertent beneficiary designation if a change of beneficiary designation was not completed prior to death.

**Changes in the law
may alter our goals
and plans with respect
to our assets.**

Birth of a Child

It is not uncommon for married individuals to name each other as the primary beneficiary under the will, life insurance policies and retirement assets, and then name minor children as secondary beneficiaries. It is highly recommended that individuals with children consider the establishment of a trust to serve as the contingent or secondary beneficiary, instead of naming the children as outright beneficiaries. Minor children are not legally able to own any property. As such, property received during minority would need to be held under legal guardianship and

distributed to the minor upon attaining the age of 18. In most instances, even the 18-year-old child may not be financially equipped to manage and handle the financial assets distributed to him or her.

Establishing a trust and naming it the secondary or contingent beneficiary not only eliminates the need for the legal guardianship but also provides a mechanism whereby an 18-year-old is not burdened with the responsibility of managing, investing, selling or administering financial assets. More importantly, parents can name trusted individuals who share the same goals and values as them to assist their children as they grow into the financial maturity needed for success without encouraging indolence. The trusted individuals will be able to make discretionary distributions to the children, under a trust setting, for the children's support, maintenance, health and education. Note that the trust does not need to terminate at the age of 18, but perhaps at a later age to enable the child to finish school, start his or her career, own a business, get married and have children of his or her own.

Children Turning 18

As parents of minor children, we may be accustomed to doing things for them such as making medical appointments or completing banking transactions. Once they turn 18,

however, doctor's offices, banks, private and government entities will no longer speak to parents regarding their child's financial and medical affairs. In order to continue to do so after the age of 18, if desired, children should execute a power of attorney and health-care power of attorney in favor of their parents.

Change in Law

Changes in the law may alter our goals and plans with respect to our assets. For example, the passage of the Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement (SECURE) Act essentially abolished the so-called Stretch IRAs for most beneficiaries. The Stretch IRA was a strategy in which the beneficiary leverages the IRA's tax deferral by taking no more than the required minimum distributions for a number of years, resulting in a longer tax deferral period. We should be cognizant of changes in the law as it affects our assets and our decisions regarding such assets.

Admittedly, estate planning is not something that most individuals look forward to completing or reviewing.



It is, however, essential to review our estate plans — or create one — to ensure that our loved ones are taken care of in the best manner possible and in the way you intended and **not** as luck or the law has intended.

The information provided in this article is for informational purposes only and does not, and is not intended to, constitute legal advice. Readers are advised to contact their estate planning attorney to establish or modify estate plans. FOP

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BLUE VIEW

TUNE IN TO THE NEW FOP PODCAST

Listen in every week to hear from law enforcement experts, elected officials and other notable leaders to gain insight into the issues and current events surrounding the law enforcement community.

Available now on FOP.net, FOP's YouTube channel, Apple, Google, Spotify and Amazon Music.



New Retired Law Enforcement Concealed Carry Legal Defense Coverage

The FOP Legal Defense Plan's Board of Trustees has had numerous requests from current and prospective participants to review broadening coverage under the current HR-218 LEOSA Plan. After diligent review and analysis, the Board voted to make the following changes.

The HR-218 Plan coverage was replaced with the **FOP Retired Law Enforcement Concealed Carry Legal Defense Coverage (CCC)**. The expanded coverage will offer **unlimited** legal defense for civil and criminal claims associated with the legal carrying and/or use of a concealed weapon: All reasonable and necessary legal defense costs are now covered in full when using a plan attorney. This new expanded plan will provide coverage for not only those retirees who were

qualified under LEOSA, but also those retirees who are qualified under their own state laws to carry a concealed weapon. **Coverage does not include claims related specifically to the open carrying of firearms.**

The CCC went into effect on **January 1, 2021**. If you are a current HR-218 retired member, unlimited coverage and the enhanced benefits automatically took effect on January 1, 2021, with no additional cost. Upon renewal of your coverage in 2021, the new annual fee of \$75 will take effect. For all new retired members joining the plan after January 1, 2021, the annual fee is \$75.

If you are an active law enforcement officer covered by the FOP Legal Defense Plan, LEOSA coverage is already included. CCC is for **retired law**

enforcement officers only and separate from the FOP Legal Defense Plan.

The Board is excited to provide yet another excellent benefit for our FOP law enforcement brothers and sisters. In today's unstable times, it is crucial to make sure you are protected.

The Legal Plan values your business and thanks you for your continued support. To enroll, please visit our website at foplegal.com and select Join Now > Retired Law Enforcement Concealed Carry Coverage. Full coverage, eligibility and other exclusions can be found in the Plan Description at foplegal.com, under the About > Library section. If you have questions pertaining to these changes, enrollment or the plan in general, please contact Hylant at (800) 341-6038 or via email at info@foplegal.com. **FOP**



FOP LEGAL DEFENSE PLAN

ADMINISTRATIVE * CIVIL * CRIMINAL

Protecting Your Future TODAY

Legal defense coverage has become a necessity for law enforcement as the frequency and cost of allegations against peace officers continue to rise. The FOP Legal Plan offers you and your lodge members a very affordable comprehensive plan.

FOP LEGAL DEFENSE PLAN PRICING			
Full Coverage Group Rate	Full Coverage Individual Rate	Two-Coverage Group Rate	Two-Coverage Individual Rate
\$300	\$310	\$64	\$68
Administrative	Administrative		
Criminal	Criminal	Criminal	Criminal
Civil	Civil	Civil	Civil

For enrollment and marketing information, please call **1.800.341.6038**

foplegal.com

The National Fraternal Order of Police University (NFOPU) has successfully paved the way for hundreds of FOP members to pursue higher or continued education. For more information on the NFOPU Consortium, go to fopconnect.com/education-connect/about-the-consortium.



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Cincinnati, OH



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Olivet, MI



Arlington, VA



Ashland, OH



Rosemont, PA



Adelphi, MD



Santa Ana, CA



Thomasville, GA



San Diego, CA



Albany, NY



Tiffin, OH



Williamsburg, KY



Washington, DC



Nashville, TN



Fayette, IA



Saint Charles, MO



Cypress, CA



Minneapolis, MN



Cincinnati, OH



Forest City, IA



Labor Services: A Year in Review

The best feedback we receive in Labor Services is looking objectively at how we have served FOP members. Around this time every year, we review not only where we excelled but where we can improve. This year, we are happy to report that we have continued to expand Labor Services to new units and have seen consistent renewals for units we have served over the years.

Over the past year, we have renewed 39 units and brought 21 new units on board. Labor Services has seen continued growth over the past decade, with our greatest growth occurring over the past five years — with no indication of slowing down. Such rapid and consistent growth is directly attributed to our commitment to representing FOP members' labor rights and benefits. As a result of this growth, we have hired two more part-time labor specialists, bringing us to a total of nine specialists across the country. These specialists are committed to working directly in the field with our members and helping them every step of the way

Just the Facts:

» Labor Services has achieved consistent and continued growth over the past decade, and it's directly attributed to its commitment to representing FOP members' labor rights and benefits. As a result of this growth, Labor Services has been able to hire more staff and increase on-site training and education opportunities on bargaining and representation for members nationwide.

in representation, whether that be at the bargaining table or at a grievance hearing.

With our consistent growth, there has also been an increase in requests for training and education. Multiple on-site trainings are scheduled for this year, including our annual Collective Bargaining Seminar in Las Vegas, as well as customized on-site training. We welcome the opportunity to come to your city and train FOP members, tailoring the training to specific local needs. These trainings not only help members better understand bargaining and representation, but they also help us better understand local

needs and assist us in our commitment to continually improve our services.

We understand that the fight never ends. The years pass and the seasons change, but the need for law enforcement advocacy will never cease. In all that we do, Labor Services will continue to improve and grow for our members, and we will never cease to advocate for your needs. We look forward to a great year of continuous growth and to reporting a year from now that we have grown even bigger and better as we continue to fight for FOP members everywhere. **FOP**

There Is ALWAYS Another Option

FOP Vetted and Approved Crisis Hotlines

FOP.net/officer-wellness/crisis-hotlines

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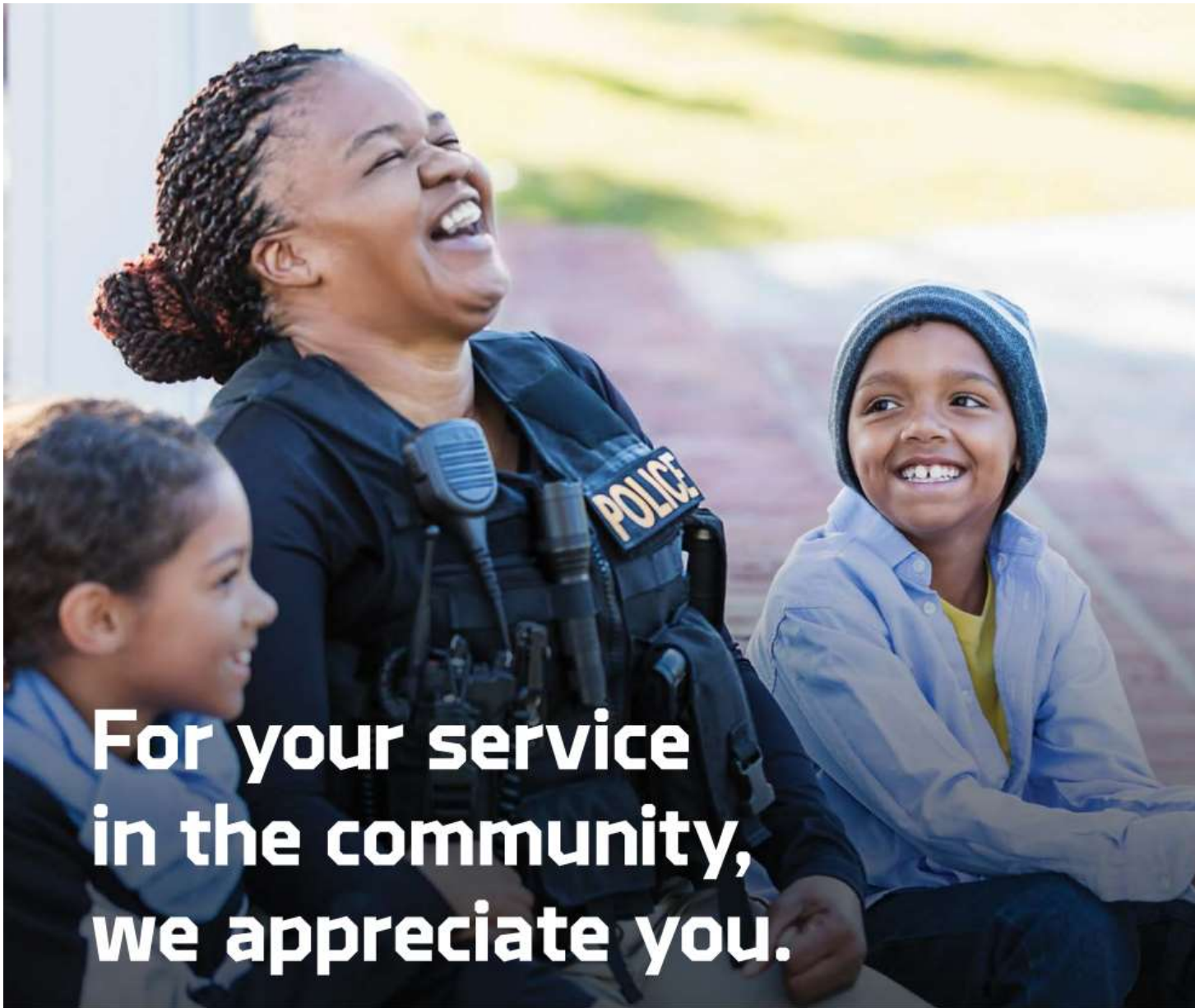


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