

OFFICER WELLNESS SUMMIT PREVIEW // P. 24

FOP



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The Protect and Serve Act Is Not About Politics — It's About Protecting Lives



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

As we begin a new year, I want to wish every member of the Fraternal Order of Police, and your families, a healthy, safe and prosperous year ahead. The work you do each day under increasingly difficult circumstances continues to make a profound difference in the lives of the communities you serve. Despite the challenges facing our profession, the FOP enters this year united, determined and poised to continue strengthening our voice, our influence and our impact nationwide.

The coming year presents both serious challenges and important opportunities. With more than **382,000 members strong**, the Fraternal Order of Police remains the leading advocate for the safety, rights and dignity of America's law enforcement officers. As we look ahead, our mission is clear: we will continue to speak with clarity, conviction and facts, and we will not allow politics or rhetoric to overshadow the real dangers facing those who wear the badge.

One of our top priorities this year is the passage of the **Protect and Serve Act**, legislation that directly confronts the epidemic of targeted violence against law enforcement officers. In December, I had the honor of representing the members of the Fraternal Order of Police before the House Homeland Security Committee in Washington, D.C. Going into the hearing, I was genuinely encouraged. For the first time in some time, we were seeing meaningful movement on the FOP's top legislative priority: addressing the rising and undeniable threat of violence directed at law enforcement officers. I extend my sincere thanks to Homeland Security Committee Chairman **Representative Andrew Garbarino** for scheduling this important hearing.

Unfortunately, that optimism faded quickly.



What should have been a serious, unified discussion about officer safety instead devolved into a political circus, with nearly half the panel determined to assign blame to President Trump rather than focus on the facts. This crisis did not begin under one administration, nor will it end with one. It is a long-term trend that spans multiple administrations, and it demands honest attention — not partisan theater.

And the data is undeniable.

Since the FOP began collecting and verifying this information just seven years ago, **2,553 officers have been shot and 415 have been killed in the line of duty**, and our nation has experienced a disturbing rise in ambush-style attacks. In the last five years alone, **620 officers were shot in 483 separate ambush attacks**, resulting in **135 line-of-duty deaths**. More than half of those officers were not responding to a call for service; they were ambushed simply because they wore a badge.

These are not selective numbers. They are real, verified incidents that reveal an unmistakable and deeply troubling trend.

This is an epidemic — one fueled by rhetoric that dehumanizes and vilifies the men and women who wear the badge.

The hearing should have been about acknowledging this deadly trend and committing to solutions that protect our officers and our communities. Instead, it became yet another slap in the face to America's law enforcement professionals.

Despite the theatrics, the Fraternal Order of Police will continue to speak the truth, present the data and fight relentlessly for the safety of our nation's law enforcement officers. They deserve nothing less.

Watch the full hearing at tinyurl.com/fop-house-hearing.

As we move forward into this new year, the path ahead is clear. The Fraternal Order of Police will not be silenced, distracted or deterred. We will continue to confront this epidemic with facts, integrity and unwavering resolve, and we will press Congress to act with the urgency this crisis demands. The Protect and Serve Act is not about politics — it is about protecting lives. Our members put on the uniform every day knowing the risks; the least our nation can do is acknowledge those risks and stand firmly behind them. Together, united and resolute, we will continue to fight for the safety, respect and support every law enforcement officer has earned and deserves. **FOP**



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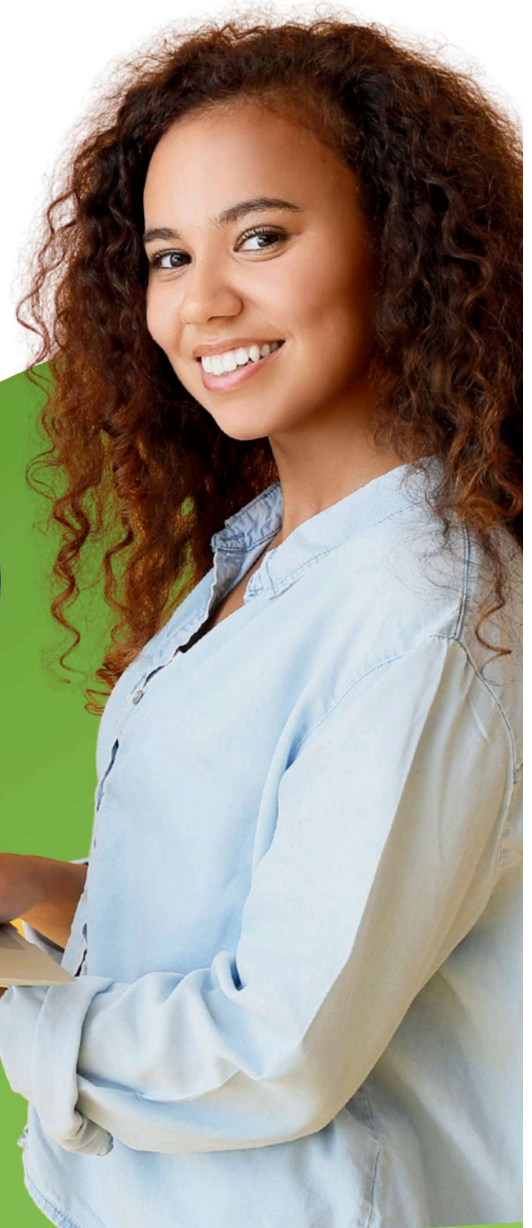
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Refining the New Membership System and Kicking Off the New Year



// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact Jimmy Holderfield at (904) 813-0067, or jholderfield@nationalfop.org.

Happy new year, my brothers and sisters. Pam and I enjoyed Christmas by hosting our family dinner and spending time with our sons, daughter-in-law and granddaughters. I hope you had a great holiday as well and stayed safe.

As I reported last month, 2025 was a great year with many positive changes for us all. A special thanks goes to President Yoes, our National Executive Board, our legislative staff, our National Office staff, and the various state and local lodge officers who worked tirelessly and gave their resources to make the changes happen. We have a busy and aggressive agenda for 2026 and beyond. The heavy lifting has already begun. Our top national legislative priority is the Protect and Serve Act; however, we also have four other top-tier items, consisting of collective bargaining rights, the LEO Equity Act, the LEOSA Reform Act and the HELPER Act. Please make plans to be at our annual "Day on the Hill" legislative initiative February 2–4. More information on the hotel and agenda is forthcoming. Now is the time to make appointments with your representatives and senators.

Last month, we hosted a workshop at the National Office with the National FOP IT Team and the IT engineers from ACGI, our new membership



David McCoy and Adam Davis from ACGI with Matthew Phillips, Mark Hong and Gavin Boler from the NFOP IT Team



Chairman of Trustees Rob Pride and Secretary Holderfield watching a demonstration of the membership database

UPCOMING EVENTS



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database vendor, December 14–17. This training was much needed and gave ACGI a firsthand view of our operations and needs. We brought the various departments in for individual needs discussions, including Membership, Accounts Receivable, Treasurer's Office (Accounts Payable), Social Media, Seminars, Mass Communications, National Headquarters Administration and Labor Services. We also arranged for a two-hour Zoom meeting discussion

with 20 local and state lodge secretaries on specific issues, problems and needs they have for managing membership data at their respective levels. National President Pat Yoes and National Chairman of Trustees Rob Pride joined in the workshop.

The question I get the most is "Is the new Association Anywhere system developed by ACGI a good system?" My

Continued on page 12 >

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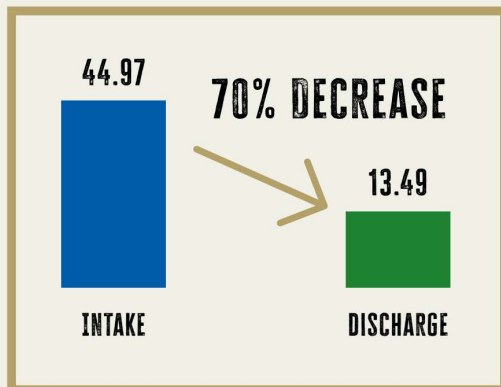
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"I had a seamless experience referring a member to First Responder Wellness. The staff was incredibly supportive and fantastic to work with throughout the entire process. It's the only treatment facility I would confidently recommend to our members."

Marco Monteblando,
Executive Director
Washington State FOP

To schedule a tour of our program or to get more information please reach out to Jeff McGreevy, Public Safety Advocate, Retired Sergeant and Peer Support Lead at jeff.mcgreevy@frhealth.com

AVERAGE PCL-5 (PTSD) SCORE AT ADMISSION AND DISCHARGE



Updated 4-1-2025.

VALIDATED OUTCOMES

Our clients' PCL-5 (PTSD) scores on average show a 70% reduction from admission to discharge. More about the PCL-5 below.

- A score of 38 or higher is enough for a provisional diagnosis of PTSD.
- Total score of 31 or higher suggests the client may benefit from PTSD treatment.
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SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

Continued from page 10 >

evaluation is yes and no. Yes, because it does offer more functions than our previous membership system, VUE (powered by Velarium), but it is not as user-friendly as our more experienced secretaries and authorized users are accustomed to. Obviously, with any new system there is a learning curve, and our human nature is to resist change. When we went live with the new system, right after the National Conference in August, it was a nightmare. Nothing was working as we needed. Local and state secretaries couldn't get an accurate count of their membership. HALO and our other vendors couldn't fulfill orders because they couldn't verify membership. Our Membership Department couldn't print membership cards. The list goes on and on, but fortunately, through the dedication of our IT staff, Mark Hong, Steve Kim, Matthew Phillips and Gavin Boler, we were able to address the glitches, functions and add-on features with ACGI's IT engineers. Both IT teams meet at least daily, and I meet with both teams at least weekly for an executive progress report.

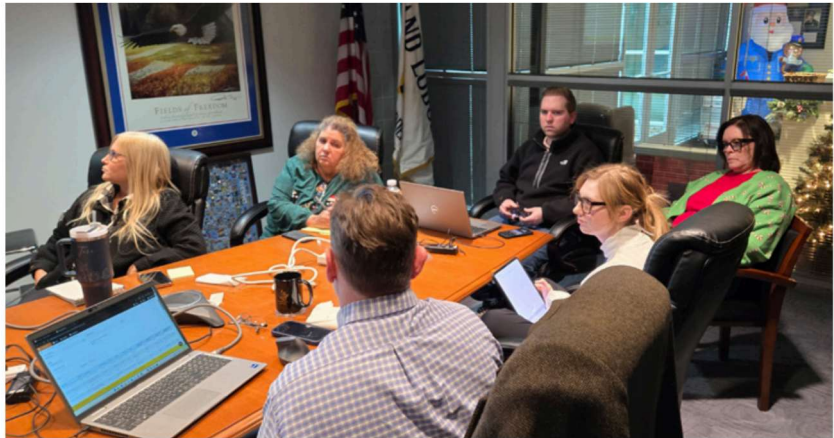
One of the pressing issues to be fixed is the uniform printing of membership cards. Right now, some cards are printing with a mixture of uppercase and lowercase letters, while others are printing in all uppercase. This glitch has been addressed, and engineers and software developers are working on a resolution. We could have waited until it was fixed, but that would have delayed



Discussion over issues in the system



Workshop on bill pay



Training on the mass email and communications component



Review of priorities for the Membership Department

you receiving your 2026 card. I know this is frustrating to lodge secretaries and members. I also realize that it doesn't look professional, but be assured, it will be fixed for the future.

I have also been asked why we went live with the new system right before first-half per capita. There are several reasons, but the primary reason was

cost. We contracted with ACGI in January 2023 to build the new system. Our desire was to have it developed by August 2023 at a cost of \$400,000. We experienced numerous delays on both our side and ACGI's. After several intense meetings with our IT staff and

Continued on page 14 >



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SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

Continued from page 12 >

ACGI's management, and changes in IT personnel on both sides, the project started to move forward. Mark Hong was contracted as the NFOP IT consultant. His expertise as a former chief engineer for Amazon is invaluable. He came on board in May 2025 and hit the ground running. He has not slowed down. He is also available to local and state lodges to build special needs programs, such as grievance tracking, that integrate with the new system. As we were building the new system, we continued to pay the monthly maintenance cost for the VUE system, to the tune of \$17,000 per month. That is money that is better spent on legislative projects and other initiatives. Ideally, we would have run the membership systems in tandem for six months so that any glitches could be worked out before going live, but that would have meant spending another \$102,000.

If you have experienced an issue with the new system, let us know. If you have suggestions on improving the system, send me an email. I appreciate everyone's



Zoom meeting with IT engineers, Membership Department, and local and state secretaries

patience with the new system, and know that we work every day on making it the best system possible. We want it to be user-friendly and functional. I also want to thank our Membership staff, Roxie Hollis, Elijah Brewer and Noah Cornett, for their hard work answering your questions, processing per capita and printing the 2026 membership cards. They are true professionals to the Order.

In closing, happy new year and stay safe. Know that my staff and I are here to assist you in any way we can. I look forward to seeing you soon. **FOP**



System overview and review

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 capital.



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Cops & Kids: Bringing Holiday Cheer to Children in Need

TIMOTHY CHASTAIN / WEST VIRGINIA
LODGE #122 PRESIDENT

On December 12, members of Cabell County FOP Lodge #122 conducted the Cops & Kids program, which is designed to build relationships between local FOP lodges and the community. Officers taking underprivileged children shopping for Christmas presents or school supplies shows them that the police in their area are friends and are always there to help. Giving a child a present they otherwise might not receive, or the supplies they need to succeed in school, can make a lasting impression.

This year, we were fortunate to assist nearly 30 local children with gifts and clothing for the Christmas season. The

event included a pizza party with Santa, a shopping experience with officers and support members, and the distribution of a turkey breast for each family to take home.

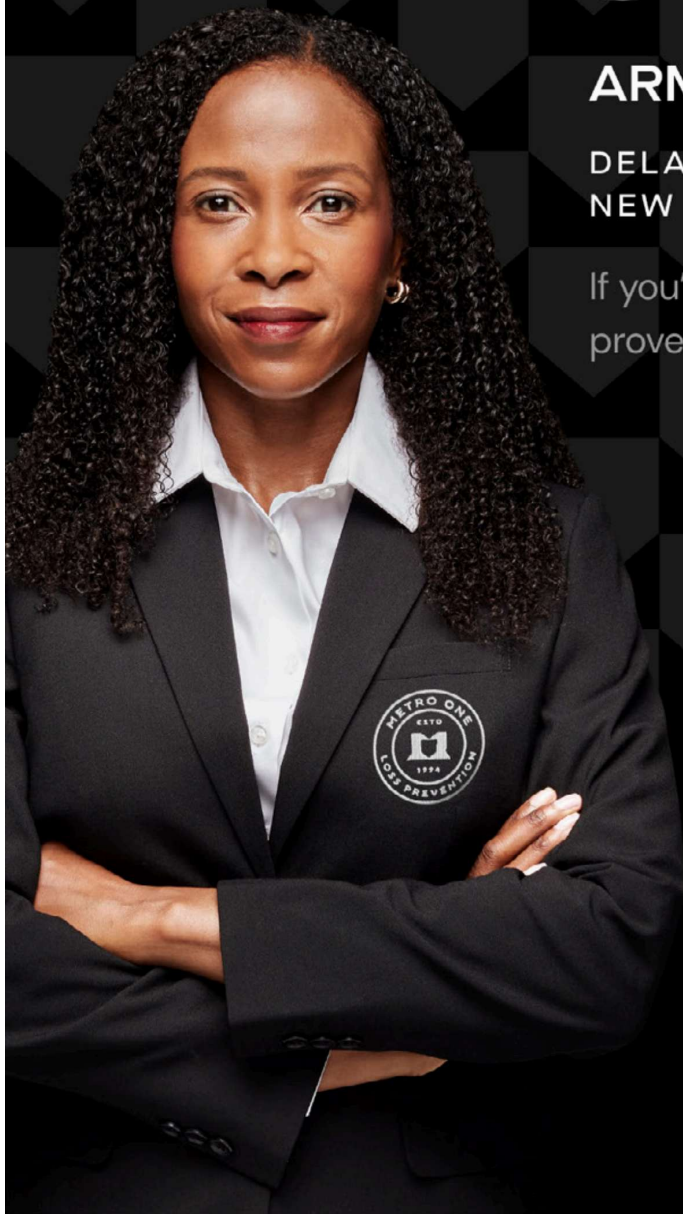
Officers from the Cabell County Sheriff's Office, Barboursville Police Department, West Virginia State Police, West Virginia State Fire Marshal's Office and Milton Police Department represented their agencies at the event. Also in attendance was 2026 Ms. West Virginia Back the Blue, Amy Gibson.

The program was made possible through generous monetary donations from community members. We extend a heartfelt thank-you to Pizza Vibes for donating the pizzas; Tower Foodfair in Barboursville for providing the turkey breasts; and Walmart Barboursville for

donating chips, drinks and desserts and for their outstanding assistance during the shopping experience. **FOP**



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ILLINOIS

FOP Logo Unveiling Ceremony at Easterseals Academy Chicago Campus

ROCKY NOWACZYK / FOP
EASTERSEALS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN
AND ILLINOIS NATIONAL TRUSTEE

On October 6, the Easterseals Academy in Chicago unveiled the Fraternal Order of Police logo, prominently displayed above the scoreboard in the Easterseals gymnasium. The day was celebrated as FOP Day at the school, which serves students with autism spectrum disorder, emotional disability, developmental delay or intellectual disability. Chicago John Dineen FOP Lodge #7 had its food truck on site, serving meals to staff, students and guests in attendance. The event also received local media coverage from ABC 7 Chicago.

The school was opened for tours, and the Easterseals company HB Threads hosted a pop-up booth in the lobby of the gymnasium, selling clothing products, magnets and buttons, all manufactured by Easterseals students. The unveiling of the FOP logo was a long time coming, but we were finally able to secure a prominent place in the gymnasium. It will serve as a reminder to students, staff and visitors that the FOP



played a significant part in supporting the construction of the gym and will continue to support our charity of choice, Easterseals.

Now, every time someone looks at the scoreboard, they will see the FOP logo proudly displayed. Many lodges donated money to this project, including the National Lodge, state lodges, local lodges

and individual donors. The final product is a fitting tribute to all the FOP lodges and members who worked tirelessly to make this happen.

I want to personally thank you all for this NFOP recognition and support. Please continue to support our charity of choice, Easterseals. We are FOP strong! **FOP**





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ILLINOIS

A True FOP Legend

ROCKY NOWACZYK / ILLINOIS
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An FOP legend and beloved man of the people, John Dineen recently celebrated his 89th birthday. A true Yankee Doodle Dandy, John was born on the Fourth of July. Many FOP members, NFOP Conference delegates and friends have been asking how John is doing, and I am happy to report that he is doing well. While limited mobility



Lodge #7 Field Rep. Mike Cosentino, NFOP Trustee Rocky Nowaczyk, Lodge #7 Trustee Harold Brown, John Dineen, Chicago P.D. Sgt. Tim Dineen, Lodge #7 President John Catanzara, Lodge #7 Second VP Dan Gorman and Lodge #7 Trustees Chair Dave DiSanti

makes travel difficult, his mind remains as sharp as ever.

John wishes to be with his FOP family but knows his limitations. The Chicago Police Department FOP Lodge #7, which John founded, has been renamed in his honor and is now known as the Chicago John Dineen Lodge #7. A lifelong leader, John demonstrated his

talents and commitment through his work with the NFOP and Lodge #7.

John deserves every accolade he has earned. If you get the chance, send John a card to let him know you are thinking of him and to thank him for all his service to the FOP. He would be grateful for the mail, and you would surely make a Yankee Doodle Dandy very happy. **FOP**



Perhaps you or your lodge were featured in the magazine and you'd like a keepsake to share or display?

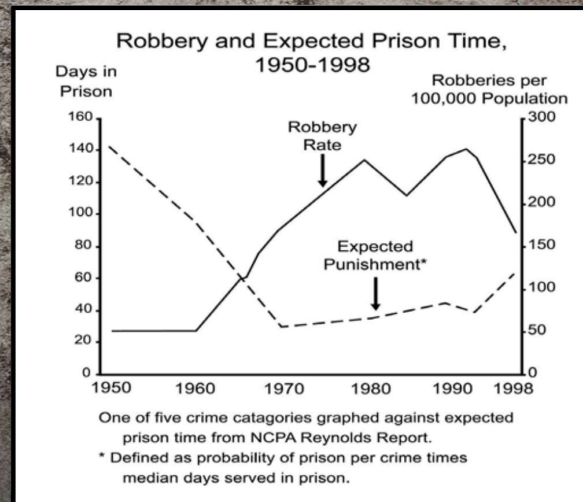
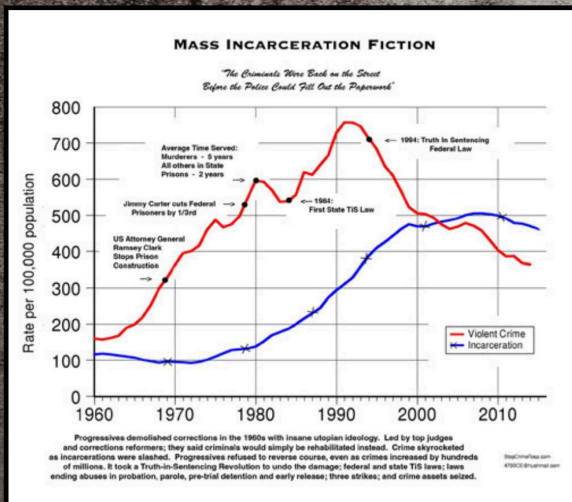
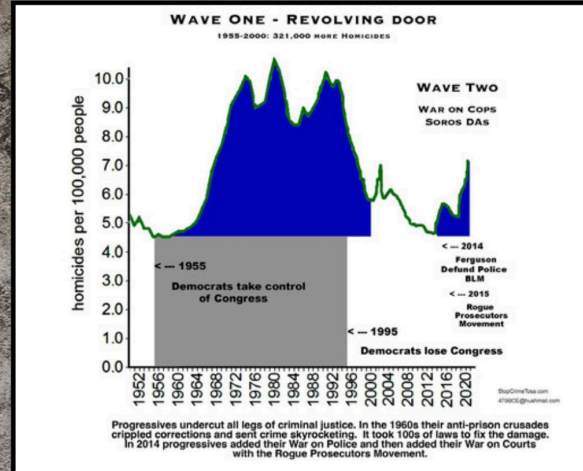
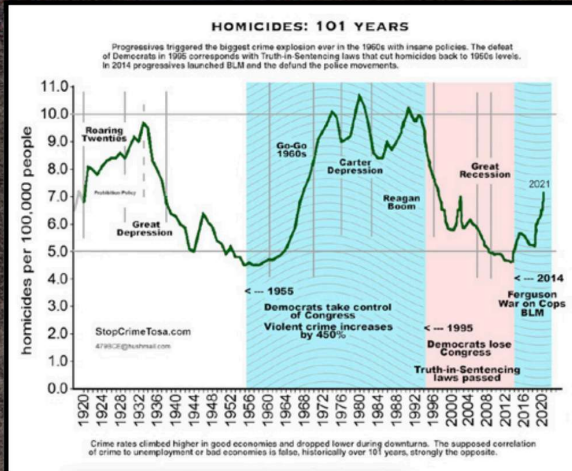
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NEW JERSEY

Honoring Veterans During the Holiday Season

RON MORENO / FOP LODGE #144

In December, Camden City New Jersey FOP Superior Officers Lodge #144 and the American Legion Post 372 co-sponsored the "Thank You for Your

Service" event. We were honored to present each of the veterans of Post 372 with a dinner bag, a \$75 ShopRite gift card and beverages at the Legion's holiday party. A huge thank-you to Wakefern/ShopRite for their support. **FOP**





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| WELLNESS |

A photograph of two hikers standing on the peak of a rocky mountain. The hiker on the left is wearing a grey jacket and dark pants, while the hiker on the right is wearing a red jacket and dark pants. They are both looking out over a vast, hazy landscape. The mountain peak is covered in dry, golden-brown grass and rocks. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

Starting the New Year With a Focus on Wellness

**2026 FOP OFFICER WELLNESS
SUMMIT AND WELLNESS
PROFESSIONALS' FORUM PREVIEW**

SHERRI MARTIN / DIRECTOR OF WELLNESS

In 2026, the National FOP is bringing something new to the field of law enforcement. With the inaugural Pathways to Excellence event, the FOP will offer more training options than ever, all under one roof! As part of this unparalleled event, the National Officer Wellness Committee is once again proud to bring you the annual Wellness Summit, and we are looking forward to the strongest program ever! This year marks the seventh annual FOP Wellness Summit, scheduled to take place March 30–31 at the South Point Hotel in Las Vegas, with the Wellness Professionals' Forum the day prior on March 29. These events bring agendas full of internationally known presenters sharing the most current information in officer wellness. The National Officer Wellness Committee convenes each year to plan the agendas, choosing the most current topics for presentations. We were blessed this year to receive an unprecedented response to our call for proposals, and we are excited to be including a range of topics and engaging presenters!

Our 2026 Wellness Summit will kick off each day with the option to join other attendees in getting physically active — whether yoga or a group walk or run, getting the blood flowing and our minds ready to learn. When the main agenda begins each day, we will hear from National FOP leaders as well as corporate sponsors who have supported the work of the Officer Wellness Committee in making this event possible. We will soon be revealing a special keynote speaker, who is guaranteed to energize!

Over the two days of the Summit, attendees will have over 20 options of seminars to choose from, on topics ranging from sleep and nutrition to financial wellness, relationship building and many others. Our National FOP Auxiliary will be joining us to share information with attendees about programs for bolstering family wellness that have become a priority for their organization. Some new interventions and methods for treating trauma will be introduced, and we will be joined by Dr. John Violanti, the foremost expert and scholar on police suicide. As we hear firsthand from experts on each topic, there is sure to be something for everyone!

As more funding and resources have become available to police agencies for wellness program development, and as



our culture shifts to focus more on officer health, it becomes ever more important to learn about best practices. The 2026 Summit will provide tools for officers and agencies at every level of experience, including those just beginning to build their wellness program and those looking to add new information and features to existing wellness efforts. We will be joined by Dr. Jacqueline Drew of Griffith University in Australia, who has partnered with the FOP to conduct international research on the experiences of police, ensuring that the profession is well-informed about what works for wellness.

We have heard from past Wellness Summit attendees that they have learned a great deal at the Summit by hearing about the experiences of others. At the 2026 Wellness Summit, we are bringing back the Wellness Program Showcase, which will highlight wellness initiatives developed in South Dakota and Colorado, where strides have been made to reform and expand state wellness programs. These sessions provide an opportunity to share with attendees real-world examples of how agency wellness programs are instituted, developed and advanced, and in some cases, rejuvenated. With wellness programs becoming more and more common and increased funding becoming available for their development, these sessions serve to inform both small and large departments and every size in between.

At the Summit, we will again host the Blue Family room, assisted by our National FOP Auxiliary, which will provide not only

information on the work of the Auxiliary, but also a chance for police family members from across the country to come together in fellowship. The Summit will feature several breakout sessions designed to be informative for law enforcement families. As families are a critical piece of officer wellness, we encourage attendees to bring along their family, and we are offering a special event registration rate for law enforcement spouses attending with their officer. If you are bringing your family along to South Point, this is a wonderful opportunity to connect with other law enforcement families!

We look forward to seeing you at the Wellness Summit! We encourage members who know and work with mental health professionals to also let them know about the FOP Wellness Professionals' Forum. This one-day seminar takes place on the day before the Wellness Summit begins and provides an opportunity for clinicians to come together and learn from other mental health professionals working in the field through a series of seminars, group discussions and networking. Attendees of the Wellness Professionals' Forum often also enjoy attending the Summit, which we encourage as a way to learn more about officer wellness and the FOP, while building bridges and breaking down barriers and stigma.

Your National Officer Wellness Committee is excited to be kicking off a new year with a focus on wellness, and many exciting developments lie ahead. We look forward to seeing you soon! **FOP**

EAT SMART: A SIMPLE GUIDE FOR BUSY OFFICERS BUILDING A BALANCED PLATE

Police officers experience long hours, rotating shifts and stressful situations that make healthy eating feel harder than it should be. Eating smart isn't about perfection — it's about making small, doable choices that help sustain energy, keep you sharp on duty and support long-term heart and brain health.

What Is a Balanced Plate?

Even on a tight schedule, thinking about your plate in three simple parts can make mealtime easier:

- **Half fruits and vegetables:** Add color and nutrients that support your immune system and help your body recover from high-stress days. Fresh, frozen or canned (low sodium/packed in water) all work — whatever fits your schedule.
- **One-quarter whole grains:** Brown rice, whole wheat wraps, quinoa and oats offer steady, lasting energy to help you stay alert on patrol or during long calls.
- **One-quarter lean proteins:** Chicken, fish, beans, eggs or packed-to-go options like tuna packets help keep you fuller longer and support muscle strength.

Eating smart isn't about strict rules. It's about getting a balanced mix most of the time — whether you're eating in the car, grabbing something between calls or packing for a double shift.

How Food Supports Heart and Brain Health on the Job

Police work demands focus, stamina and resilience — and food plays a major role in all three.

- **Fruits, vegetables and whole grains** help reduce inflammation and support healthy blood flow.
- **Lean proteins and healthy fats** (nuts, seeds, olive oil, avocados) fuel the brain and help with memory, focus and decision-making.
- **Limiting processed foods, heavy sodium and added sugars** helps keep blood pressure steady, which is important for both brain function and heart health under stress.



Eating smart supports the strength and clarity officers need both on and off duty.

Small Steps That Fit Real Police Schedules

You don't need more on your plate — just a few practical shifts that work in high-stress, on-the-go environments:

- Pack easy-to-carry snacks like fruit, nuts or yogurt cups.

Continued on page 28 >

Check out the American Heart Association's Life's Essential 8™ (tinyurl.com/AHALifesEssential8) resources or scan the QR code to explore more tools that can help you track your health, set goals and stay strong — for the job and beyond.

The American Heart Association and the National Fraternal Order of Police are proud to collaborate to improve the cardiovascular health and overall well-being of law enforcement officers.



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SHARE YOUR STORY!

So many of us learn from the experiences of others, especially others with whom we share things in common. Do you have a story to tell of overcoming adversity in your own life? The National Officer Wellness Committee would like to hear it!

Whether you would just like to share your story privately with peers on the Committee or are willing to share with readers so that all can learn from it and celebrate with you, we want to hear from you! Contact us confidentially at officerwellness@fop.net.



EAT SMART

Continued from page 26 >

- Keep a refillable water bottle in the patrol car.
- Add one vegetable to a meal when grabbing takeout.
- Choose whole-grain wraps, brown rice bowls or grilled protein options when possible.
- Prep one balanced meal ahead of a busy week so there's always a backup.

These small actions add up — supporting heart health, boosting energy and helping officers feel their best through long shifts.

Eating smart is not about rigid rules; it's a set of simple choices anyone can make, one meal at a time. **FOP**

WELLNESS PROVIDERS

Chateau Recovery
Midway, UT

chateaurecovery.com/first-responders

FHE Health:
Shatterproof Program
Deerfield Beach, FL

fhrehab.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

Throttle and Thrive
Palos Verdes Estates, CA

throttleandthrive.com

Warrior's Heart
Bandera, TX

warriorsheart.com

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Wichita State University

The Wichita State University–Law Enforcement Partnership by Dr. Michael Birzer

In the past, the idea of collaborations between academics and police was met with skepticism. Academics were often seen by law enforcement as detached scholars in their ivory towers, instructing officers on how to perform their duties. Thankfully, this perception has changed significantly over time, and such collaborations now offer advantages to both police departments and academic researchers. This is particularly true in the context of evidence-based policing.

Faculty members at Wichita State University's School of Criminal Justice are frequently sought after by law enforcement agencies for their expertise and research support, leading to enduring collaborations between the university and these agencies. For example, faculty members were recently called upon to conduct research that would guide the Wichita Police Department in handling calls for service deemed low-risk and low-harm. For the researchers, it was a dream realized. The chance to conduct a randomized controlled trial — the gold standard of research.

The study was carried out over a six-month time frame. It involved collaborating with and instructing 9-1-1 dispatchers on the protocol for the random assignment of incoming calls. Additionally, it included training police officers stationed at the crime call center who handled police reports from citizens assigned to the experimental group. In the research project, two graduate students and 14 undergraduates were chosen to help by conducting a follow-up survey with participants from the study. This opportunity allowed the students to gain valuable experience as they collaborated closely with faculty, learning



Dr. Michael Birzer,
professor and graduate
coordinator in the School
of Criminal Justice

about the complexities and potential of executing a randomized controlled trial. Moreover, at the beginning of the study, two researchers who were affiliated with the University of Kansas at that time became part of the research team. This marked a genuine collaboration between law enforcement and academia, involving two universities. The outcome was a successful randomized controlled trial conducted in Wichita, leading to a fundamental strategic shift in how the police department manages calls that are low in harm and risk.

The study mentioned above is just one example of numerous partnerships with local law enforcement throughout the area. Recently, a group of interdisciplinary faculty members carried out a needs assessment for a rural sheriff's department and their county council that guided their decision regarding the construction of a new jail. Faculty members have conducted various other studies recently for local law enforcement, including multiple studies of the stop patterns of the police, a study on the recruitment and selection process of the local police department, an evaluation of the "Lights On!" voucher

program, writing and validating police promotional examinations and a police harm index, among others.

I should mention that faculty members contribute not only to research and technical support for law enforcement but also to other areas of the criminal justice system. Faculty members have been offering continuous evaluation services for the local community corrections and drug court for many years. Several years ago, a group of faculty members conducted a study on jail overcrowding for the local sheriff's office.

Police departments engaging in partnerships with universities can bridge together to make informed evidence-based decisions on fundamental police policy and strategy. The National Institute of Justice and the International Association of Chiefs of Police have advocated for stronger collaboration between police departments and academic institutions. Research will continue to play a pivotal role in shaping policing strategies in key areas of criminal justice, resulting in effective practice and policy.

At Wichita State, our partnerships with law enforcement also benefit our students, who can collaborate with researchers. It also benefits researchers, who can carry out their studies within law enforcement organizations and publish their results in academic journals and professional magazines. Ultimately, it also aids law enforcement or other criminal justice agencies by providing them with high-quality research that helps them make well-informed decisions.

In 2018, Wichita State became distinctive when the local police and sheriff's academy relocated to a newly constructed \$9 million training center on campus. The School of Criminal Justice is located on the academy's third floor.

Wichita State University has rightfully gained from numerous collaborations. This is particularly appropriate given that the School of Criminal Justice was established in 1937 by Orlando Winfield "O.W." Wilson, the architect of the American professional policing model. Wilson served as the chief of the Wichita Police Department from 1928 to 1939. During his tenure, the department became one of the most forward-thinking in the nation, earning the nickname the "West Point of Law Enforcement." Chief Wilson recognized the importance of college education for police officers. He engaged with the university's leadership, leading to the creation of a police science program and a college cadet program.

The establishment of a college cadet program featuring a police science curriculum marked a significant achievement for Wichita State. Pioneered by Chief Wilson, this police science program is considered one of the first of its kind in the country. Following Wilson's lead, many police departments across the nation established similar programs. In Wichita, the college cadet program evolved over the years to the establishment of an administration of justice degree program in 1971. Students could earn both a bachelor's degree and, a few years later, their master's degree in the administration of justice. In 2000, the program's name was changed to criminal justice. The criminal justice program is still steeped in the rich liberal arts tradition, situated as an academic unit of the Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

In the spirit of O.W. Wilson, who long ago championed collaboration between law enforcement and academic institutions, the School of Criminal Justice remains committed to exploring innovative partnerships with organizations that serve the justice system. **FOP**

The National Fraternal Order of Police University

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

FOP.net/fop-university.



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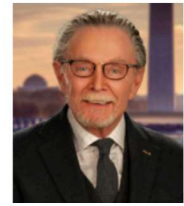


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Congress Closes Out 2025

Legislative Update: National Defense Authorization Act

Early last month, the House passed S. 1071, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2026, on a decisive 312–112 vote. The Senate passed the bill one week before Christmas, on a 77–20 vote, and the measure is expected to be signed into law by President Trump.

The bill contains four provisions from S. Amdt. 3272, the Law Enforcement and Crime Victims Support Package, which unanimously passed the Senate in November:

- The **PROTECT Our Children Reauthorization Act**, which would update and reauthorize the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force Program that helps state and local law enforcement agencies combat online child exploitation and abuse
- The **Chief Herbert D. Proffitt Act**, which would amend the Public Officers' Benefits (PSOB) program to include retired public safety officers who are injured or killed in a targeted attack
- The **Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act**, which would categorize duty-related cancer fatalities as a line-of-duty death under the PSOB program
- The **Improving Police Critical Aid for Responding to Emergencies (CARE) Act**, which would expand the existing U.S. Department of Justice's Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne-JAG) program to allow for the purchase of trauma kits

The FOP led the effort to ensure that the Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act was included in the final NDAA since it passed as part of the Senate's

Just the Facts:

» During the twilight days of 2025, Congress passed the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2026. The sweeping measure, which contains FOP-supported provisions from the Law Enforcement and Crime Victims Support Package, is expected to be signed into law by President Trump. Also in December, National President Yoes joined other law enforcement leaders to testify before the House Homeland Security Committee, urging lawmakers to pass the Protect and Serve Act as attacks on police reach alarming levels. In addition, the FOP has remained engaged with the administration and legislators on bills addressing the fight against fentanyl, drone usage, officer health and wellness, organized retail theft and more.

version of the bill back in August. The PSOB program provides death and education benefits to survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters and other first responders, and disability benefits to officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty. Research shows that officers, on average, have higher rates of cancer than the general population due to their job, which exposes them to known carcinogens. Despite this, current law does not recognize duty-related cancer fatalities in the PSOB program.

Law enforcement officers are not only exposed to physical threats, but also to threats from hazardous environments. This bill finally recognizes the dangers that our officers place themselves in every day, and once it is signed into law, the PSOB program will be able to accept claims from officers and their families who sacrificed their life or their health in the name of public service.

The NDAA also includes robust counter-unmanned aircraft systems (c-UAS) authorities for state and local agencies and corrections facilities, allowing them to undertake countermeasures to protect the public

from threats posed by the criminal use of unmanned aircraft systems.

The provisions in the NDAA will help state and local law enforcement agencies directly confront real threats and will make communities across our country safer. The use of drones has become increasingly dangerous — from trafficking contraband into our prisons to overt threats to major sports venues or other large gatherings. The compromise text gives these agencies a clear and responsible framework to detect, track and respond to dangerous drone activity.

National FOP President Yoes Testifies Before Homeland Security Committee: Calls for Passage of Protect and Serve Act

In early December, National FOP President Yoes appeared before the House Homeland Security Committee at a hearing entitled “When Badges Become Targets: How Anti-Law Enforcement Rhetoric Fuels Violence Against Officers” (tinyurl.com/bdcdjdza). It was the first congressional hearing since 2018 to address the issue of how hateful rhetoric and vitriol aimed at law

enforcement can lead to targeted attacks on law enforcement officers.

As part of his testimony, President Yoes provided clear evidence of the terrifying increase in violence targeted at police (tinyurl.com/2zjarf3x). Yet Congress has taken no action on H.R. 1551, the Protect and Serve Act. This bill, which was crafted as a response to the ambush crisis, would impose federal penalties on individuals, in very specific circumstances, who deliberately target law enforcement officers with violence. The measure has been stalled in the Committee on the Judiciary since its introduction. President Yoes told the members of the committee: “The erosion of respect for law enforcement coupled with public figures spewing anti-police rhetoric — rhetoric that is amplified by social media platforms — has fueled greater aggression toward police officers than what has been seen in previous years — undoubtedly emboldening people to turn verbal assaults into brazen acts of violence against law enforcement.”

The FOP has been tracking the rise of targeted attacks against law enforcement officers for nearly a decade. As of November 30, 314 officers had been shot in the line of duty in 2025, with 43 killed. There had also been 62 ambush-style attacks on law enforcement officers, resulting in 83 officers shot, 21 of whom were killed.

To date, neither the House nor Senate Judiciary Committees has scheduled action on the bill.

News From the Trump Administration

U.S. Attorney General Pamela J. Bondi announced that she has established a Second Amendment Rights Section within the U.S. Department of Justice’s Civil Rights Division to focus on investigating state and local laws that may infringe on the right to bear arms, treating it as a fundamental civil right like voting or housing.

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration is intensifying its fight against the deadly threat of synthetic opioids with the launch of Fentanyl Free America, a comprehensive enforcement initiative



and public awareness campaign aimed at reducing both the supply and demand for fentanyl.

A rulemaking proposal from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), “Promoting Technological Solutions to Combat Contraband Wireless Device Use in Correctional Facilities,” was recently published in the *Federal Register* and is now open for public comment (federalregister.gov/d/2025-21325). The proposal closes a legal loophole that currently prohibits state and local prisons from being able to signal-jam contraband cellphones.

Update: FOP-Backed Bills Advance in the House

The House considered and passed H.R. 5107, the Common-Sense Law Enforcement and Accountability Now in D.C. Act, on a 233–190 vote. The FOP is a key supporter of the legislation, which repeals the entirety of Washington’s Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022 (tinyurl.com/2h4v7sb8). This bill goes beyond just the restoration of the collective bargaining provisions and would also eliminate restrictive measures that have hampered the ability of the officers serving the Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) from doing their jobs and allow them to perform their duties more effectively while maintaining essential protections. This measure is of particular importance to

the FOP’s D.C. Police Union, which represents the officers of the MPD. The bill is now pending in the Senate.

The House also considered and passed H.R. 5214, the District of Columbia Cash Bail Reform Act, on a 237–179 vote. The bill was transmitted to the Senate for further action. The FOP supports this legislation, which would require pre- and post-conviction detention for crimes of violence and dangerous offenders, and mandates cash bail for certain offenses. These reforms will help prevent dangerous individuals from being released back into the community prematurely, thereby enhancing public safety and reducing recidivism. The bill is awaiting action in the Senate.

The House Committee on the Judiciary favorably reported H.R. 2189, the Law Enforcement Innovate to De-Escalate Act, on a vote of 18–8. The bill, which the FOP supports, now awaits consideration on the House floor (tinyurl.com/3vw8z8vm).

Update: DJI Drones to Be Added to FCC’s Covered List

Drones and other products manufactured by Shenzhen Da-Jiang Innovations Sciences and Technologies Company Limited (DJI Technologies) and Autel Robotics are expected to be moved to the covered list by the FCC as of December 23. This is in accordance with legislation, the Countering CCP

Top Priorities in Brief



H.R. 3226, the Law Enforcement Officers Equity Act

House: 46 co-sponsors (13 R, 33 D)

Senate: Not yet introduced

H.R. 1505/S. 636, the Public Safety Employer–Employee Cooperation Act

House: 49 co-sponsors (8 R, 41 D)

Senate: 1 co-sponsor (1 D)

H.R. 2243/S. 679, the LEOA Reform Act

House: Passed

Senate: 8 co-sponsors (8 R)

H.R. 1551/S. 167, the Protect and Serve Act

House: 94 co-sponsors (76 R, 18 D)

Senate: 23 co-sponsors (23 R)

H.R. 2094/S. 978, the Homes for Every Local Protector, Educator, and Responder (HELPER) Act

House: 100 co-sponsors (35 R, 65 D)

Senate: 21 co-sponsors (7 R, 14 D)

To see a full list of legislation supported by the FOP in the previous Congress, please visit tinyurl.com/ycy5k5rv. Members should continue to monitor the FOP's social media platforms and our website for the latest legislative news.



WASHINGTON REPORT

Continued from page 33 >

Drones Act, as part of FY2025 NDAA. Section 1709 of that legislation requires that a designated national security agency — such as the U.S. Departments of Defense or Homeland Security, or an agency from the intelligence community — conduct an audit within one year to determine if the specified drone equipment, drones and other technology manufactured by DJI Technologies and Autel Robotics pose an unacceptable risk to national security.

In passing this provision, Congress provided the federal government a one-year period to review the potential threat posed by these devices rather than an immediate ban to allow time for assessment and potential industry transitions.

Unfortunately, no such national security agency has been designated to undertake this review. According to Section 1709, products produced by DJI Technologies or Autel Robotics will be placed on the FCC's covered list effectively barring the equipment from using FCC-regulated radio frequencies for remote control, video transmission or telemetry and making it illegal to operate or certify new models in the U.S. Existing drones bought from DJI Technologies or Autel Robotics will continue to operate, but no new imports will be allowed, and device reauthorizations could be blocked. At this time, there is no indication that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) would restrict existing DJI Technologies or Autel Robotics equipment.

Under current law, no entity may use federal funds to purchase products from these companies, which have been deemed by several federal agencies to pose an unacceptable risk to U.S. national security because of their close relationship with the Chinese Communist Party and Chinese government:

- Guidance from the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency (CISA) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (tinyurl.com/ybfuafdf)

- FCC calls for DJI Technologies to be moved to the covered list (tinyurl.com/2c6rd6cf)
- Intelligence bulletin from Homeland Security Investigations (tinyurl.com/yc87mbyw)

The National FOP is fully engaged with the administration and Congress on all issues related to the growing use of drones in law enforcement operations, and we will continue working to ensure our law enforcement agencies have access to these vital tools.

Other Legislative Activity

The FOP has supported the following legislation since the last issue of the *Journal*:

- **H.R. 2189**, the Law Enforcement Innovate to De-Escalate Act, which would establish the term “less-than-lethal projectile device” in federal statute to ensure that these devices are properly classified by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) based on a new five-step criteria.
- **H.R. 2853**, the Combating Organized Retail Crime Act, which would establish a center within Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) to coordinate federal, state, local and private-sector efforts against these organized retail crimes.
- **H.R. 3304**, the Providing Child Care for Police Officers Act, which would authorize the secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to create a competitive grant program to establish childcare programs for law enforcement families.
- **H.R. 5107**, the Common-Sense Law Enforcement and Accountability Now in D.C. (CLEAN D.C.) Act, which would repeal the entirety of D.C.'s Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022. This legislation goes beyond just the restoration of the collective bargaining provisions and would also eliminate restrictive measures that have hampered the ability of the officers serving the Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) to do their jobs and allow them to perform their duties more effectively while maintaining essential protections.

- **H.R. 5214**, the District of Columbia Cash Bail Reform Act, which would require pre- and post-conviction detention for crimes of violence and dangerous offenders and mandates cash bail for certain offenses.
- **H.R. 5282**, the Reauthorizing, Supporting and Treating Officers in Crisis (STOIC) Act, which would reauthorize funds made available from the DOJ's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) to continue services for law enforcement officers and their families to include stress reduction and suicide prevention through 2029.
- **H.R. 5744**, the Targeting Online Sales of Fentanyl Act, which would direct the Government Accounting Office (GAO) to investigate the methods used to enable online sales and assess the procedures and efforts of federal law enforcement and online providers in combating such sales.
- **H.R. 6042**, the Law Against Nefarious Drones, Enforcement, Deconfliction (LANDED) Act, which would create policies for acquiring and deploying approved counter-unmanned aerial systems (c-UAS) detection systems, authorize processes for state agencies to detect, monitor and mitigate drone threats, and establish a grant program to fund equipment and training.
- **H.R. 6120/S. 3189**, the Strengthening Resources for Our Schools (SROs) Act, which would amend existing law to offer a federal income tax exemption on retirement pay for any officer or veteran who chooses to serve as a school resource officer.
- **H.R. 6147/S. 3221**, the Expanding Health Care Options for First Responders Act, which would give law enforcement and other public safety professionals the option to buy into Medicare at the age of 50.
- **H.R. 6602**, the Supporting Blue Envelope Programs Act, which would allow individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and intellectual and developmental

disabilities (I/DD) to physically present a blue envelope to officers during traffic stops in order to improve outcomes.

- **H.R. 6605**, the Secure Our Skies Drone Safety Act, which would require the GAO to submit reports to Congress on the use of drone and counter-drone systems by law enforcement agencies and to submit recommendations on which policies should be changed to ensure law enforcement agencies can properly counter these threats.
- **H.R. 6683**, the Safer Schools Act, which would establish two pilot grant programs — one to conduct risk assessment of public schools and another to fix the physical vulnerabilities that were identified.
- **S.3366**, the Back the Blue Act, which would improve protections for law enforcement officers by increasing the penalties for those who kill or assault law enforcement officers, judges and other public safety officers.

Sign Up for the FOP's Weekly Update

Are you getting the *Weekly Update* from Capitol Hill in your inbox every week? If not, please go to tinyurl.com/FOP-weekly-update to sign up.

Getting the *Weekly Update* in your mailbox every Friday will help keep you and your members up to date with the latest news from Washington, D.C., with Congress and the administration.

Make sure you are a regular visitor to all our social media platforms, as these frequent posts are the best way to keep up with the National FOP's daily activity. Follow the National FOP on:

- Facebook (@GLFOP)
- X (@GLFOP)
- Instagram (@FOPnational)
- Truth Social (@FOPNational)

Do your part! Please **share, comment and like** our content.

NFOP PAC Update

The 2026 midterms are less than a year away, but our PAC is well short of the funds it needs to make an impact in next year's elections.



We need more of our members to contribute to ensure that our PAC has the resources to support candidates who will fight for our officers and the issues that are important to them. With the next election cycle still months away, we have time to replenish our PAC funds.

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 to and understand the challenges facing law enforcement today.

We are urging members (and lodges) to sign up for recurring, monthly contributions using their credit card. This is the most effective and reliable way to contribute and to strengthen our PAC.

These contributions need not be for large amounts (though these are also very much appreciated) — but every dollar helps! If every FOP member gave just \$1, we could raise \$382,000! If 10% of our members gave just \$5 this year, we would raise more than \$191,000.

To donate online, please go to nfop-pac.firstresponderprocessing.com. 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 Ave. NE, Washington, D.C., 20002. For inquiries about our effortless payroll deduction program or to sign up for recurring monthly donations, please contact the Steve Young Law Enforcement Legislative Advocacy 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. **FOP**



Attention, Labor Leaders: Pathways to Excellence



This year, the National FOP invites you to take part in our **new and expanded training initiative: Pathways to Excellence.**

Why Attend?

- Gain cutting-edge insights into today's evolving law enforcement environment
- Strengthen your leadership skills to meet tomorrow's challenges
- Connect with fellow leaders and elevate your impact

Program Highlights

- **Kickoff:** Officer Wellness, Labor Leadership Summit and Legal

Counselors Seminar

- **Closing:** Excellency in Chaplaincy and Leadership Matters

Just the Facts:

>> Pathways to Excellence, taking place in Las Vegas March 29–April 3, is an expanded training program that features training tracks centered on a variety of interests, including labor, legal, wellness, chaplaincy, leadership and more. The Labor Leadership Summit, to be held March 30–31, will deliver the latest strategies for today's evolving law enforcement environment and help attendees build their leadership skills, stay ahead of trends and prepare their teams for tomorrow's challenges.

Who Should Join?

- New and current labor leaders ready to set — not just follow — the trends
- Those committed to preparing their teams for success in a rapidly changing landscape

Don't miss this exclusive opportunity to grow, lead and inspire. **Pathways to Excellence is your chance to step forward as a leader of leaders. 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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Navigating Mental Health Encounters



Lessons From *Estate of LeRoux v. Montgomery County*

A recent federal district court decision from Maryland in *Estate of Ryan LeRoux v. Montgomery County* serves as an important reminder of the legal expectations placed on police officers when responding to calls involving individuals who may be experiencing a mental health crisis. While the court did not determine that the officers violated the law, it held that the plaintiffs had presented enough evidence for a jury to consider claims under the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), the Rehabilitation Act and state negligence law. This decision reflects the growing legal scrutiny applied to police responses in mental-health-related encounters. It also highlights how training, crisis-response policies, internal communication and on-scene decision-making can determine whether an officer faces liability.

On July 16, 2021, Montgomery County, Maryland, police officers responded to a call at a McDonald's drive-thru. The caller reported that a customer refused to pay, claimed he already had, would not move his vehicle and was "acting crazy," while also advising that no one was in danger. The call was classified as a nonpriority trespassing complaint. When Officer Brooks Inman ultimately arrived, he found a man identified as 21-year-old Ryan LeRoux reclined in the driver's seat with headphones on, holding his cellphone and ignoring all commands. A handgun was visible on the passenger seat. Additional officers arrived, boxed in the vehicle, deployed stop sticks, used spotlights and loudspeakers, and continued efforts to communicate with the driver.

Over the next 30 to 40 minutes, officers repeatedly observed that LeRoux remained unresponsive, noncommunicative and exhibited abnormal behavior. Several officers

openly speculated he was in a mental health crisis or attempting "suicide by cop." Although a crisis negotiator was requested, that resource had not yet arrived when officers reported that LeRoux raised the gun in his right hand. Four officers then fired a total of 23 rounds, fatally striking him.

The LeRoux family sued, alleging that the County and officers violated the ADA and Rehabilitation Act by failing to adequately accommodate an obvious mental health disability, and that the officers were negligent and grossly negligent under state law. LeRoux had a history of mental health struggles and subsequent interactions with law enforcement. Just four days before the McDonald's interaction, Montgomery County police responded to a trespass call involving LeRoux at a Holiday Inn Express. Officers found LeRoux lying in bed and "smiling at officers." He refused to leave the property and was eventually handcuffed and escorted away.

The defendants moved for summary judgment on all claims, but the trial court denied the motion. The court found sufficient evidence that LeRoux had an "obvious" disability. Specifically,

Just the Facts:

» In *Estate of Ryan LeRoux v. Montgomery County*, a lawsuit against Montgomery County and its police department regarding the July 2021 shooting death of Ryan LeRoux — who was experiencing a mental health crisis at a McDonald's drive-thru — the U.S. District Court for Maryland determined that the officers had violated LeRoux's rights under the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), the Rehabilitation Act and state negligence law. The court found that the officers did not appropriately respond to a person with a mental health disability and failed to rely on their crisis intervention and de-escalation training. It noted that officers are expected to adjust tactics in mental health encounters, and that neglecting to do so puts both them and their agencies at risk for liability.

the evidence showed LeRoux's prolonged unresponsiveness, inability to follow simple instructions, inconsistent or delusional statements during phone contact, prior recent interactions between LeRoux and County police involving psychosis-like behavior and the officers' own statements that "something was wrong." Based on this record, the court concluded that a jury could find that the officers knew, or should have known, that they were interacting with a person with a mental health disability.

A significant portion of the court's analysis focused on what officers were trained to do, not merely what they did. Montgomery County Police Department, like many agencies, provides crisis intervention and de-escalation training. Officers testified that this training includes recognizing symptoms of psychosis; understanding that some individuals cannot respond to commands; using time, distance and environmental control to slow incidents down; summoning crisis negotiators or mental health professionals; and adjusting communication strategies. The court held that this training was directly relevant to whether officers "should

have known” that LeRoux required accommodations — and whether their failure to act constituted negligence or deliberate indifference.

The defendants argued that the presence of a handgun created exigent circumstances that absolved it of ADA obligations. The court disagreed. It noted that the gun remained on the seat for most of the incident, officers already had the vehicle immobilized, isolated and contained, and they had reason to believe the individual could not process commands. The court emphasized that exigent circumstances eliminate ADA duties **only** when immediate action is required for safety — not simply because a weapon exists in the environment. This ruling reinforces a growing trend nationwide: the ADA can apply in dynamic, tactically challenging encounters.

This case illustrates the legal risks agencies face when mental-health-related encounters overlap with use-of-force decisions. Several lessons emerge. Courts increasingly expect officers to adjust tactics when confronted with signs of mental illness. When a person is unresponsive, confused or displaying psychotic behavior, officers are expected to adjust their approach accordingly,

and a failure to do so may expose both the officer and the agency to liability. In *Estate of LeRoux*, the negotiator was only minutes away when officers opened fire. The court did not decide that waiting would have changed the outcome — but it held that a jury could reasonably question the timing. Thus, documentation — both verbal and written — is crucial. Courts will scrutinize whether officers considered alternatives while waiting for a crisis negotiator to arrive.

Finally, the court emphasized that once a subject is effectively contained, officers are generally expected to continue de-escalation efforts unless a clear and immediate threat arises. In this case, the vehicle was already boxed in, the surrounding area secured and officers had been on the scene long enough to slow the tempo of the encounter. Under those circumstances, courts may view the situation as sufficiently controlled that ADA accommodations and crisis intervention team (CIT) tactics must still be applied. The key takeaway for officers is that the mere passage of time — or the presence of a weapon — does not automatically eliminate ADA obligations. Those obligations remain unless the threat becomes truly imminent and unmistakable.

The *Estate of LeRoux* decision does not conclude that the officers acted unlawfully, but it underscores that mental health encounters are increasingly evaluated through the lens of disability rights law. For police officers and legal advisors, the message is clear: crisis-intervention principles are not merely best practices — they are becoming legal expectations, and training is no longer just guidance; it is evidence. As mental-health-related calls continue to grow nationwide, agencies that integrate disability-law compliance into everyday policing — not just specialized units — will be better positioned to protect both the public and their officers from legal exposure. **FOP**

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There Is ALWAYS Another Option

FOP Vetted and Approved Crisis Hotlines



[FOP.net/officer-wellness/crisis-hotlines](https://www.fop.net/officer-wellness/crisis-hotlines)



Pathways to Excellence — There's an App for That!

Great news! As of **January 1**, we've launched the **free Whova app** for all Pathways to Excellence attendees. If you're planning to participate in any part of Pathways, this app is essential. It's your all-in-one tool to map out your schedule, stay updated in real time and keep pace with this fast-moving event.

- Need to find the room for a specific presentation? It's in the app.
- Heard a rumor about a room change? Confirm it in the app.
- Want to connect with a presenter who inspired you? Their contact info is in the app — you can message them (or any other attendee) directly.

Plus, we'll be rolling out fun in-app challenges — think FOP history trivia, photo contests, maybe even a scavenger hunt. You'll have to join us to find out!

Still Deciding About Attending Pathways to Excellence?

Consider this:

- **Room rates** from Sunday through Friday are just **\$110 per night, all in**.
- **Six tailored training tracks** allow

you to focus on your specific interests, including labor, legal, wellness, chaplaincy, leadership and more.

- **One week, one location** — meet all your training needs without making multiple trips throughout the year.
- **Unmatched opportunities to learn** from FOP leaders — and for them to learn from you — in a setting designed for collaboration and connection.

What's Included?

- **Daily lunch** and refreshments throughout the day
- **Multiple networking receptions**
- **Hand-selected vendors** who support FOP members
- **FOP merchandise**, including the inaugural Pathways challenge coin

Still need another reason? Visit

tinyurl.com/3sbvn2yw to view the tentative weekly schedule. You'll recognize legendary FOP voices — and discover dynamic new presenters ready to spark your curiosity. And we are currently communicating with a high-profile speaker for Wednesday that you won't want to miss!

I can't emphasize enough how exceptional this year's Pathways to Excellence will be. Whether you're a brand-new leader or a seasoned veteran, there's truly something for everyone. Make it your New Year's resolution to join us **March 29–April 3**. You won't want to miss it. To register, visit tinyurl.com/3cs2wxn9.

Until we meet again, God bless you and God bless the FOP! **FOP**

FOP Division of Education and Outreach

If you have further questions, contact Director Keith Turney at ktorney@fop.org, or (815) 482-5620. For more information on CRI-TAC, visit cops.usdoj.gov/cri-tac.

Check out FOP.net

Our user-friendly website keeps you up to date on the topics that affect you!

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PATHWAYS TO EXCELLENCE

EDUCATION & EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT

MARCH 29–APRIL 3, 2026

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Packages are available.
See event registration page for details and pricing.

Exclusive Deal for Attendees!

We are pleased to offer a special room rate of **\$104 per night** (includes all fees) for event attendees.
This rate is available Sunday through Thursday.

Wellness Professionals' Forum – \$200

(March 29)

The Wellness Professionals' Forum brings together mental health and wellness professionals for a day of learning and networking. Highlights include an introduction to FOP wellness initiatives, seminars on working with law enforcement and a networking session.

Officer Wellness Summit – \$450

(March 30–31)

This interactive event offers 20+ breakout sessions, expert panels and hands-on wellness activities, plus access to FOP-approved programs supporting officers, families and clinicians.

Labor Leadership Summit – \$525

(March 30–31)

This exclusive course delivers the latest strategies for today's evolving law enforcement environment. Build leadership skills, stay ahead of trends and prepare your team for tomorrow's challenges.

Legal Counselors Seminar – \$675

(March 30–31)

The Legal Counselors Seminar delivers two days of specialized training for attorneys representing law enforcement. Topics include *Brady/Giglio*, arbitration, workers' comp, PTSD, officer wellness, duty to intervene, corrections, social media, key cases and expert witnesses.

Excellency in Chaplaincy – \$300

(March 31–April 1)

Join the first national gathering of FOP chaplains! This "back to basics" event connects new and seasoned chaplains for growth, networking and advanced development opportunities.

Leadership Matters – \$500

(April 1–3)

Leadership Matters is designed for new and aspiring leaders seeking a full view of the FOP. Choose tracks for key roles like secretary or treasurer, or explore topics such as effective meetings, Robert's Rules, labor and legal defense.

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