

WEBINARS COMING SOON // P. 28

FOP



JOURNAL

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MARCH 2025

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Social Security Administration
Begins Distributing Retroactive
WEP and GPO Payments

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NATIONAL
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UPDATES ON
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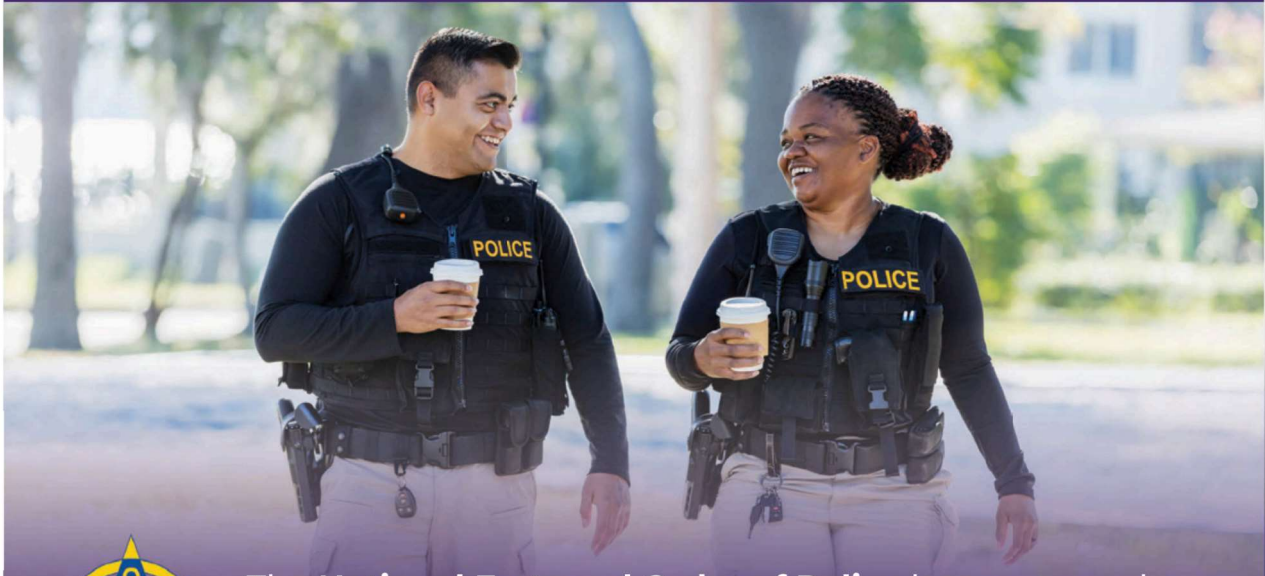
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FEATURES



12 // Women's History Month

Honoring Female FOP Leaders

14 // National Police Week

Check Out the Events Planned for National Police Week

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EXECUTIVE BOARD

8 // President's Message

Checks Are in the Mail: Social Security Fairness Act Implementation Begins

10 // Secretary's Message

National Update: Training, Conference and Honoring Women in Leadership

DEPARTMENTS

16 // Wellness

Wellness: The FOP Way

18 // Washington Report

Collective Bargaining Bill Introduced in the House

24 // Legal Counsel

Brady, Giglio and Legislative Efforts to Protect Officers

26 // Education and Outreach

The FOP Is Many Things to Many People

28 // Labor News

Webinars Coming Soon

29 // FOP Legal Defense Plan



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Checks Are in the Mail: Social Security Fairness Act Implementation Begins



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

I am thrilled to share an important update regarding the implementation of the Social Security Fairness Act — a historic victory that the Fraternal Order of Police played a leading role in securing. After decades of relentless advocacy, we have successfully repealed the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO), ensuring that public safety professionals and other public servants receive the benefits they rightfully earned.

Initially, we anticipated a 12–18-month timeline for the Social Security Administration (SSA) to implement these changes. However, I am pleased to report that the process has been expedited significantly! Here's what our members need to know:

1. Retroactive Payments

Starting the week of February 24, 2025, the SSA began issuing retroactive benefit payments to those affected by WEP and GPO.

These payments will cover the increased benefits dating back to January 2024, when the law officially took effect.

If you are entitled to a retroactive

payment, a one-time deposit will be made into the bank account SSA has on file by the end of March 2025.

2. Monthly Benefit Increases

Beginning April 2025, members who were previously impacted by WEP and GPO will see their adjusted, full benefits reflected in their Social Security payments.

3. SSA Notifications

Any member receiving an adjustment or retroactive payment will receive an official notice from SSA explaining the changes to their benefits.

For Those Who Never Applied for Benefits

Many individuals never applied for Social Security benefits because they believed (almost certainly correctly) that they wouldn't receive anything due to WEP and GPO. Now that these provisions have been repealed, you must apply to receive your benefits.

- You can create an online account and file for benefits through the SSA website.
- If you are applying for survivor

benefits, you must call SSA directly at (800) 772-1213.

- When prompted with, “*How can I help you today?*” simply say “*Fairness Act*” to be connected with a WEP/GPO-trained representative who can assist with your application.

This victory is a testament to the power of FOP unity and advocacy. After more than four decades of fighting for fairness, we have finally ensured that our retired brothers and sisters — and their families — will receive the benefits they earned through a lifetime of public service.

The SSA is working to process adjustments for over 3 million people, and while most of these updates will be automated, some cases will require manual review due to individual complexities. For additional questions, visit the SSA website or call (800) 772-1213 for direct assistance.

This is a major milestone for our profession and a reminder of what we can accomplish when we stand together. I look forward to seeing this implementation move forward swiftly and smoothly, delivering long-overdue justice to those who have served with dedication. **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 capital.



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National Update: Training, Conference and Honoring Women in Leadership



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

Brothers and sisters, I hope this March edition of the *FOP Journal* finds you well. February was filled with a tremendous number of training activities, starting with the annual Labor Summit and followed by the Legal Counselors Seminar. Both were held at Planet Hollywood in Las Vegas and were well attended. A special presentation was made by the CEO of Axon (formerly known as Taser International), Rick Smith, who informed both groups of attendees of the emerging use of artificial intelligence in law enforcement. More specifically, how AI is being integrated into report writing via body camera video. He also discussed how Axon is improving Taser 10 technology by designing electro-probs to penetrate thick clothing. At the conclusion of Smith's three-and-a-half-hour presentation, he held an outstanding Q&A session, answering the questions from labor leaders and taking note of the concerns of our various FOP attorneys.

From February 16 to February 22, our annual Wellness Summit kicked off, followed by Leadership Matters. This year's programs were updated from last year's, with several new topics and breakout sessions being offered. Approximately

60% of the Leadership Matters students indicated they were first-time attendees and learned much about how to run a lodge. One of the tasks I look forward to every year is giving tours of the National Secretary's Office (HQ) to the sisters and brothers attending Wellness or Leadership Matters. This year, I guided tours each day from 4:30 p.m. until 8 p.m., and from noon until 4 p.m. on Saturday. Everyone was impressed with the office operations.

Next year, we are combining all of this training into a week-long event, March 30–April 3, 2026, and are designing it so our members can choose which track(s) they want to participate in: Wellness, Leadership Matters, Labor and Legal. The new location is South Point Hotel and Casino, located a short distance from the Las Vegas strip. The rate will be just over \$100 per night and features complimentary airport shuttle and parking, 11 restaurants, a 16-screen movie theater and two bowling alleys. The conference area easily meets our educational and meeting needs, and we will be the only group on the second-floor conference area. Save the dates, and stay tuned for more details!

We just finished doing the site reviews of three lodges that have made notice that they

wish to bid on hosting the 2029 National Biennial Conference. The locations visited were Houston, Texas; Detroit, Michigan; and Nashville, Tennessee. All three cities meet the requirements of the conference location, including the number of rooms, convention center space and amenities for attendees. Official presentations will be made in Miami, and the delegates will choose their preference.

Speaking of Miami, you should have received your hotel assignments for August by now. If not, please go to miami2025.com for more information and upcoming events. Visit the site regularly since updates will be made as we get closer to the conference. I am pleased to advise you that my office has expanded Expo this conference by an extra day. The Expo will be open Sunday through Wednesday. Also, if your local or State Lodge intends to present proposed changes to the National Constitution, By-Laws or Ritual, such proposals must be received by my office by April 6, 2025.

Your National Board of Trustees and State presidents will be meeting this month, March 13–15, in Salt Lake City, Utah. Much business will be discussed, including any proposed changes to the

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.

Constitution and By-Laws that the trustees may have. We will also receive an overview of the 2027 Biennial Conference, which will be held in Salt Lake City.

March is National Women's History Month. Join me in honoring our women FOP leaders at the local, state and national levels. Their impact on the Order can be seen in so many ways, such as through our Wellness program, lodge administration and legislative initiatives, to name just a few.

In closing, mark your calendar for National Peace Officers Memorial Day on May 15. This year, we will once again honor our fallen sisters and brothers at the U.S. Capitol. Please see our announcements on the full schedule of ceremonies and events during Police Week. It is a pleasure serving you as your National secretary. Please know that my staff and I stand ready to help in any way. Be safe. **FOP**

FOP CALENDAR

Spring State Presidents Meeting

March 13, 2025
Salt Lake City, UT
Info and registration:
utahstatefop.com/images/Spring-2025-Presidents-Board-Meeting-2.pdf

Spring National Board Meeting

March 14-15, 2025
Salt Lake City, UT
Info and registration:
utahstatefop.com/images/Spring-2025-Presidents-Board-Meeting-2.pdf



National Police Week

May 11-17, 2025
Washington, D.C.

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.



Charles Town, WV



Ashland, OH



Orange Beach, AL



Steubenville, OH



Romeoville, IL



San Diego, CA



Rosemont, PA



Manchester, NH



Tiffin, OH



Cincinnati, OH



Arlington, VA



Adelphi, MD



San Diego, CA



Williamsburg, KY



Fayette, IA



Minneapolis, MN



Wichita, KS

HONORING Women's History Month

As we celebrate Women's History Month in March, we reflect on the invaluable impact women have had on the FOP. We are proud

to shine a spotlight on some of the trailblazing women who lead with courage, resilience and determination. From our Wellness program to lodge

administration and legislative initiatives, these women exemplify strength, dedication and a drive to support and advance the mission of the FOP. **FOP**



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Director of Officer
Wellness Services



Lisa Curry
Arkansas State
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National Police Week

May 6 Annual Blue Mass

St. Patrick Catholic Church (downtown Washington, D.C.); 12:10 p.m.

May 10 National Police Week 5K

Registration begins at 7 a.m., with opening announcements at 8:45 a.m. Race begins at 9 a.m.

May 11 Early Arrival Day

Shuttles will only run from Reagan National Airport to your C.O.P.S. Hotel. Airport shuttle times: 9 a.m.–6 p.m.

May 11 National Police K-9 Memorial Service

National Memorial; 1 p.m.

May 12 Official Arrival Day

Shuttles will only run from Reagan National Airport to your C.O.P.S. Hotel. Airport shuttle times: 9 a.m.–6 p.m.

May 12 Law Enforcement United Arrival Ceremony

Location and time TBD

May 12 Police Unity Tour Bike Ride-In and Ceremony

Ride-in arrives at the Memorial Wall at 444 E Street, NW, Washington, D.C., at 2 p.m.

May 12 Honor Guard Reception at the Museum

Honor Guard members and teams who are volunteering for either the Candlelight Vigil or Stand Watch for the Fallen may attend. Registration is required; 7–9 p.m.

May 13 36th Annual Candlelight Vigil

Held at 8 p.m. on the National Mall between 4th and 7th Streets and Madison and Jefferson Drives. Everyone is welcome.

May 13 Escort Briefing

Washington Hilton Hotel (room TBD); 10 a.m.

May 14 20th Annual Fraternal Order of Police Steve Young Honor Guard and Pipe Band Demonstration

West Front of the U.S. Capitol at the Reflecting Pool and 3rd Street; 8 a.m.

May 14 Police Vehicle Display

U.S. Capitol Reflection Pool; 1–4 p.m.

May 14 Annual C.O.P.S. Seminar

Registration is mandatory. Washington Hilton Hotel; 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

May 14 C.O.P.S. Kids/Teens Program (Day One)

Local law enforcement facility; 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

May 14 National Emerald Society Parade

Time and location TBD

May 14 C.O.P.S. Blue Honor Gala

Washington Hilton Hotel; 6 p.m.

May 15 44th National Peace Officers' Memorial Service

West Front of the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C.; noon



May 15 Wreath Laying Ceremony

Will be held immediately following the memorial service at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial.

May 16 Annual C.O.P.S. Seminar

Registration is mandatory. Washington Hilton Hotel; 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

May 16 C.O.P.S. Kids/Teens Program (Day Two)

Local law enforcement facility; 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

May 16 C.O.P.S. Blue Family Barbecue

Washington Hilton Hotel; 6–9 p.m.

May 17 Official C.O.P.S. Departure Day

For more information, go to policeweek.org for schedule details and policeweekhg.com for Honor Guard and Drum and Pipe details.

Fraternal Order of Police National Memorial Committee

Matthew Hagen
Chair



WELLNESS: THE FOP WAY

A RECAP OF THE 2025 FOP WELLNESS SUMMIT

SHERRI MARTIN / DIRECTOR OF WELLNESS

Our sixth annual Officer Wellness Summit has just wrapped up, and the National Officer Wellness Committee is already looking forward to the future as the FOP transforms and updates our training platform. As we browse the comments and reviews from attendees of the 2025 Summit and Wellness Professionals' Forum, we are delighted that they highlight a spirit of connection and growth. Our 2025 events were the best attended ever, with the number of attendees increasing each year. Here is a snapshot of our 2025 events.

The National Officer Wellness Committee welcomed a keynote presentation from Lieutenant Colonel (ret.) Dave Grossman, who is world-renowned as one of the most recognized presenters on trauma and

violence. Sponsored by our Silver Sponsor ValorNet, he captivated attendees with his address about the state of violence in America, how law enforcement can play a vital role and his encouragement to officers about remaining steadfast and resilient.

We know that our profession has long shrouded discussions of mental health in secret corners, and one key mission of the Division of Wellness Services is to keep the conversation about officer wellness front and center. We make it an objective to remove the secrecy and mystery that might keep help-seeking stigmatized. To that end, the 2025 Summit incorporated an expert panel discussion with two doctoral-level police psychologists and one former agency head, who discussed various aspects of the intersection of psychology and law enforcement, including therapy, fitness-for-duty evaluations and wellness visits for law enforcement.

Our Wellness Program Showcase provides attendees with an opportunity to learn from the experiences of others leading a successful wellness program in their own agency. Each year, we invite an agency that has developed a successful wellness program to share the story of how they created their wellness program, including discussions of how they sustain and grow it.

This year, we welcomed the Louisville Metropolitan (Kentucky) Police Department, which has been a shining example of how an agency can work together with its community, even after strife and tragedy, to build tremendous resources and support for officers.

Summit attendees have the opportunity to build their own experience at the Wellness Summit. A variety of seminars are offered on various wellness topics so that

“We make it an objective to remove the secrecy and mystery that might keep help-seeking stigmatized.”

participants have the chance to choose topics that are of most interest to them or that match their level of experience. This year's Summit featured more presentation options than ever before. Here is a sampling of just a few of the seminars offered at the 2025 Summit:

- Anxiety and Law Enforcement
- Your Countdown to Retirement
- Functional Nutrition: Fueling Your Body to Serve Your Purpose
- The Importance of Family Resiliency
- Suicide Awareness and Prevention
- Creating Buy-In for a Wellness Program
- Coping With a Line-of-Duty Death

We were able to provide some unique and innovative experiences during the 2025 Summit as well. Thanks to the generosity of the Boulder Crest Foundation, we presented a screening of the documentary film, *Transformed by Trauma: Stories of Posttraumatic Growth*. The film highlights the experiences of first responders and veterans who have realized personal strength in the aftermath of struggle and trauma.

In an effort to keep attendees informed about the most current topics in law enforcement wellness, we added space on the agenda to discuss a shift in the way we view officer wellness. For decades, we have been told that due to our exposure to trauma in law enforcement, we are destined toward disorder after a life in the profession.

However, we now know this is not the case. A panel of experts, including

one of the scientists behind the concept of posttraumatic growth, prompted attendees to consider spreading the message of strength through adversity, of growth through exposure to trauma and of service to a cause greater than oneself.

Because we know that wellness isn't just about mental health, attendees were also offered a range of options for engaging in or learning new practices and developing healthy new habits. From a premapped self-paced run/walk course to yoga to meditation, attendees were encouraged to use the team dynamic to keep their bodies in motion and keep their minds on physical fitness as well. This year's Summit included introductions to physical wellness practices that are new to the officer wellness arena.

This year, the Wellness Summit was preceded by the fifth annual FOP Wellness Professionals' Forum. As the National Officer Wellness Committee works to build resources in the **Approved Provider Bulletin**, our national directory of culturally competent wellness services for law enforcement, we are simultaneously building a network of professional practitioners who will be able to link with and support FOP lodges, agencies and individual members to round out their wellness programs. The Wellness Professionals' Forum brought together some of those professionals for an opportunity to learn more about the FOP, our Division of Wellness

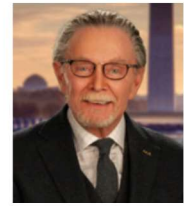
Services and the wellness initiatives we will offer into the future. The day includes seminars presented by police psychologists, with the opportunity for attendees to earn continuing education credits.

Our event could not have been a success without the support and participation of many. As the culture of wellness becomes more widespread within our profession, we are fortunate to introduce and include several sponsors, including some of our vetted and approved provider facilities, those providing smartphone applications focused on officer wellness and partner organizations like Survivors of Blue Suicide (SBS) and Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S.). We are especially grateful to our Platinum Sponsor, FirstNet, built by AT&T. Finally, the National Officer Wellness Committee wishes to extend our special thanks to our National Office staff, who worked behind the scenes to ensure that all attendees enjoyed a valuable experience.

As we look to the future and begin planning new presentations on emerging wellness topics for next year's event, we encourage all our members to remain focused on individual wellness while also looking out for your brother and sister officers. We strive each year to build a sense of community and cooperation with the goal of bringing together the best in wellness services for all of our members. We look forward to seeing you at Wellness Summit 2026! **FOP**



Collective Bargaining Bill Introduced in the House



Representatives Peter A. Stauber (R-Minn.) and Nicole J. Budzinski (D-Ill.) reintroduced the Public Safety Employer–Employee Cooperation Act as H.R. 1505. The FOP is working closely with the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) on this bill, which is a top legislative priority for both of our organizations.

The legislation would require that states “substantially provide” for the following rights and responsibilities:

- The right to form and join a labor organization
- A requirement that the public safety employer recognizes the employees’ labor organization and agrees to bargain
- The right to bargain over hours, wages and the terms and conditions of employment
- The availability of a binding interest arbitration or other impasse resolution mechanism such as fact-finding, mediation or comparable procedure
- A requirement of enforcement of “all rights, responsibilities and protections” provided by the bill, including any written contract or memorandum of understanding through a state administrative agency or court of competent jurisdiction

The Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) will determine whether or not current state law “substantially provides” for these rights and responsibilities, and if the state’s law does not, the FLRA is empowered to issue regulations to:

- Determine the appropriateness of units for labor organization representation
- Supervise and conduct elections to determine whether a labor organization has been selected as an

Just the Facts:

» Ambush attacks and violence targeting law enforcement officers in general have been steadily increasing in recent years. Last year, 342 officers were shot in the line of duty, which was a small but welcome decrease from the all-time high of 378 in 2023. Sadly, though, of those officers shot in 2024, 50 of them were killed — an 8% increase from 2023. There were 61 ambush-style attacks on law enforcement officers last year that resulted in 79 officers shot, 18 of whom were killed.

exclusive representative by a voting majority of the employees in an appropriate unit

- Resolve issues relating to the duty to bargain in good faith
- Conduct hearings and resolve complaints of unfair labor practices
- Resolve exceptions to the awards of arbitrators
- Protect the right of each employee to form, join or assist any labor organization, or to refrain from any such activity, freely and without fear of penalty or reprisal, and protect each employee in the exercise of such right
- Direct compliance by such state by order if the FLRA finds that the state is not in compliance with the regulations it issued
- Take other actions as necessary to appropriately and fairly administer the Public Safety Employer–Employee Cooperation Act, including the authority to issue subpoenas, take depositions, administer oaths, order written interrogatories and receive and examine witnesses

The bill specifically prohibits strikes and lockouts and would not preempt any law that substantially provides greater or comparable rights and responsibilities as described above. It

also prevents a state from enforcing a state law that prohibits employers and labor organizations from negotiating provisions in a labor agreement that requires union membership or payment of union fees as a condition of employment (i.e. “right to work”).

The bill would also not preempt any state law in effect on the date of enactment. In addition, a state may exempt from its state law or from the requirements established by this bill, a political subdivision of the state that has a population of less than 5,000 or that employs fewer than 25 full-time employees.

Protect and Serve Act Introduced in the Senate

Senator Thomas R. Tillis (R-N.C.) has reintroduced the Protect and Serve Act in the Senate as S. 167. This legislation is a priority for the FOP and is a direct response to the number of attacks on law enforcement officers by imposing, in limited circumstances, federal penalties on individuals who deliberately target local, state or federal law enforcement officers with violence. So far this year, there have been five ambush-style attacks on law enforcement officers in which five officers were shot, two of whom were killed.

Ambush attacks and violence targeting law enforcement officers in general have been steadily increasing in recent years. Last year, 342 officers were shot in the line of duty, which was a small but welcome decrease from the all-time high of 378 in 2023. Sadly, though, of those officers shot in 2024, 50 of them were killed — an 8% increase from 2023. There were 61 ambush-style attacks on law enforcement officers last year that resulted in 79 officers shot, 18 of whom were killed. Congress needs to act now and pass the Protect and Serve Act.

In the House, the FOP is working with Representative John H. Rutherford (R-Fla.) to reintroduce the House version of the legislation.

HALT Fentanyl Act Passes House as Senate Consideration Begins

The House passed H.R. 27, the Halt All Lethal Trafficking (HALT) of Fentanyl Act, early last month on a 312–108 vote. The Senate companion bill, S. 331, was the subject of a markup

in the Committee on the Judiciary, and several amendments were considered. A final vote on the measure will be held at the next committee meeting.

Law enforcement and other public safety officers are routinely required to enter or operate in potentially hazardous environments.

In 2018, Congress gave the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) the authority to execute class-wide

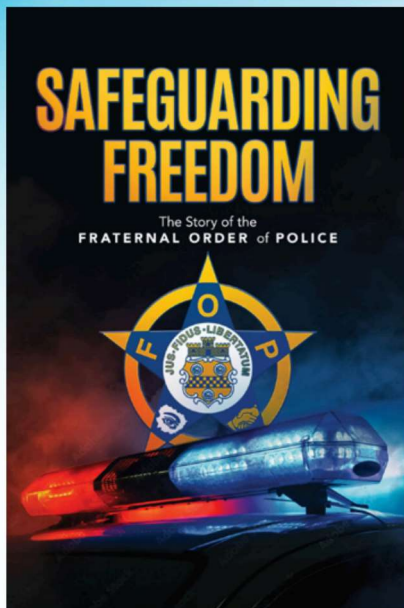
scheduling of illicit fentanyl-related substances, or analogues, as Schedule I substances under the Controlled Substances Act (CSA). This legislation makes that authority permanent and places fentanyl and any analogues on Schedule I of the CSA. The FOP strongly supports this legislation.

Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act Introduced in Both Chambers

Representatives Mary Gay Scanlon (D-Penn.) and Carlos A. Giménez (R-Fla.) reintroduced H.R. 1269, the Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act. The Senate companion bill was introduced by Senators Amy J. Klobuchar (D-Minn.) Kevin J. Cramer (R-N.D.) as S. 237.

The legislation would categorize duty-related cancer fatalities as a line-of-duty death under the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) program. Law enforcement and other public safety officers are routinely required to

Continued on page 20 >



SAFEGUARDING FREEDOM: The Story of the Fraternal Order of Police

The National Fraternal Order of Police History Committee and the National Board of Trustees are excited to present you with a new book, *Safeguarding Freedom: The Story of the Fraternal Order of Police*. This literary work is the result of reviewing historical documents, combing through thousands of photographs and conducting interviews to give the reader a comprehensive history of how the Fraternal Order of Police has impacted policing in America. Author Max DiLallo, co-author with James Patterson on numerous books, along with the direction of National History Committee Chair David Stevens, has worked tirelessly over the past year to reveal the journey of the FOP.

This fantastic book is available from the National Office for \$25 plus shipping, and the proceeds benefit our National FOP Foundation. Donations of \$30 or more to the Foundation will receive a free book.

Top Priorities in Brief



The Law Enforcement Officers' Equity Act

House: Not yet introduced

Senate: Not yet introduced

The Public Safety Employer–Employee Cooperation Act

House (H.R. 1505): 8 co-sponsors (3 R, 5 D)

Senate: Not yet introduced

The LEOSA Reform Act

House: Not yet introduced

Senate: Not yet introduced

The Protect and Serve Act

House: Not yet introduced

Senate (S. 167): 4 co-sponsors (4 R)

The Homes for Every Local Protector, Educator, and Responder (HELPER) Act

House: Not yet introduced

Senate: Not yet introduced

To see a full list of legislation supported by the FOP in the previous Congress, please visit tinyurl.com/jcy5k5rv. Members should continue to monitor the FOP's social media platforms and our website for the latest legislative news.



WASHINGTON REPORT

Continued from page 19 >

enter or operate in potentially hazardous environments. Those who are exposed to known carcinogens and who are subsequently diagnosed with cancers related to that exposure will be considered to have sustained a personal injury in the line of duty for the PSOB program if the cancer causes their death or disability under this bill.

Public Safety Free Speech Act Introduced in the House

Representatives Jefferson H. Van Drew (R-N.J.) and Stephen I. Cohen (D-Tenn.) introduced H.R. 1443, the Public Safety Free Speech Act, to clarify and protect the speech of a public safety employee by allowing them to take legal action against an employer who violates their basic First Amendment rights. Law enforcement officers should, when off-duty, be allowed to express their needs and views on workplace conditions, salaries and benefits, as well as administrative policies, without fear of retaliation from their supervisors or employers. With this protection, officers will be better able to voice their questions and concerns in the workplace, improving their working conditions and as well as their ability to serve their communities.

The FOP is working closely with the IAFF on this legislation as well.

Latest News on Trump Cabinet

- Peter B. Hegseth was confirmed as secretary of the U.S. Department of Defense on a 51–50 vote, with Vice President JD Vance casting the tie-breaking vote.
- Former South Dakota Governor Kristi L. Noem was confirmed as secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security by a vote of 59–34. The National FOP endorsed her nomination.
- Former Florida Attorney General Pamela J. Bondi was confirmed as U.S. attorney general of the United States on a 54–46 vote. The National FOP has endorsed her nomination.
- North Dakota Governor Douglas J. Burgum was confirmed as the secretary of the U.S. Department

of the Interior on an 80–17 vote.

- Howard W. Lutnick was confirmed as secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce on a 51–45 vote.
- Former U.S. Representative Sean P. Duffy was confirmed as secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation on a 77–22 vote.
- Scott K. Bessent was confirmed as secretary for the U.S. Department of the Treasury on a 68–29 vote.
- Former U.S. Representative Douglas A. Collins was confirmed as secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs on a 77–23 vote.
- Robert F. Kennedy Jr. was confirmed as secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on a 52–48 vote.

Former U.S. Representative Lori Chavez-DeRemer has been nominated to be the next secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor, and her nomination is being considered by the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

The Senate also voted to confirm Kashyap P.V. Patel as director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation on a 51–49 vote. The FOP endorsed his nomination.

Other Legislative Activity

Since the last issue of the *Journal*, the FOP has supported the following legislation:

- **H.R. 27/S. 331**, the Halt All Lethal Trafficking of Fentanyl Act, which would permanently place fentanyl-related substances as a class into Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act
- **H.R. 378/S. 83**, the Thin Blue Line Act, which would expand the list of aggravating factors in death penalty determinations for those who target, kill or attempt to kill a law enforcement or other public safety officer
- **H.R. 405**, the Keep Every Extra Penny (KEEP) Act, which would eliminate income tax on a public servant's overtime pay
- **H.R. 621/S. 180**, the Protecting First Responders from Secondary Exposure Act, which would allow state and local governments to purchase containment



devices through the existing Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant and Substance Abuse Program (COSSAP)

- **H.R. 633/S. 146**, the Tools to Address Known Exploitation by Immobilizing Technological Deepfakes on Websites and Network (TAKE IT DOWN) Act, which would clarify and expand agency authority to combat the distribution of exploitative “deepfake” technology

- **H.R. 993**, the Directing Resources for Officers Navigating Emergencies (DRONE) Act, which would allow law enforcement agencies to use Edward R. Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne-JAG) funds to help purchase and operate unmanned aircraft systems
- **H.R. 1046**, the Marc Fischer Memorial Interdiction of Fentanyl in Postal Mail at Federal Prisons

Act, which would require the director of the Bureau of Prisons to develop and implement a strategy to interdict fentanyl and other synthetic drugs in the mail at federal correctional facilities

- **H.R. 1269/S. 237**, the Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act, which would categorize duty-related cancer fatalities as a line-of-duty death under the PSOB program
- **S. 122**, the Qualified Immunity Act, which would codify the existing qualified immunity doctrine as established and upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court for decades
- **S. 516** (Klobuchar, D-Minn.), the Stopping Harmful Image Exploitation and Limiting Distribution (SHIELD) Act, which would prohibit the distribution of non-consensually distributed intimate images (NDII) that loopholes in select states have thus far prevented

Continued on page 22 >

WELLNESS PROVIDERS

Chateau Recovery Midway, UT

chateaufrecovery.com/programs/first-responders

FHE Health: Shatterproof Program Deerfield Beach, FL

therehab.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

Find more vetted and approved wellness providers
and programs at fop.net/officer-wellness/providers.

WASHINGTON REPORT

Continued from page 21 >

Funding Deadline Approaches

Congress, however, is facing a deadline of March 14 to fund the federal government or risk a partial shutdown. The House and Senate are in negotiations with no clear path forward.

Sign Up for the FOP's Weekly Update

If you aren't receiving the *Weekly Update* from Capitol Hill in your inbox every week, go to tinyurl.com/FOP-weekly-update to sign up. **This is especially important with the new Congress!**

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 new administration.

Make sure you are a regular visitor to all of 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)

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

Have You Given to the NFOP PAC?

The election of 2024 is over, but that doesn't mean we do not need to continue to raise funds for the next cycle. It will be here before you know it.

The National Fraternal Order of Police Political Action Committee (NFOP PAC) needs 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 in just two years, now is the 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 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 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 \$377,000! If 10% of our members gave just \$5 this year, we would raise \$188,500. We need your support to meet our fundraising goals!

To donate online, please visit 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**



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Brady, Giglio and Legislative Efforts to Protect Officers



In the realm of criminal prosecutions, few legal doctrines have had as profound an impact on law enforcement officers as *Brady v. Maryland*, 373 U.S. 83 (1963) and *Giglio v. United States*, 405 U.S. 150 (1972). These landmark cases established the constitutional obligation for prosecutors to disclose to the defense exculpatory evidence (*Brady*) and impeachment evidence, including credibility issues of government witnesses (*Giglio*).

For police officers, *Giglio* disclosures have led to severe consequences, including termination, blacklisting from courtroom testimony and the end of careers over credibility concerns — sometimes based on minor or unsubstantiated allegations.

In an effort to avoid potential due process violations, prosecutors often place officers with any history of credibility concerns on internal “do not call” lists, regardless of whether those concerns were formally adjudicated. As a result, departments frequently terminate officers on these lists, citing their inability to function effectively as law enforcement professionals if they cannot testify in court. Officers are often left with little to no recourse to challenge their inclusion on such lists. Moreover, there is no uniform standard for when an officer is designated as a *Giglio* witness, leading to inconsistent decision-making processes.

In response to growing concerns over the career ramifications of *Giglio* designations, several state legislatures have introduced or enacted laws aimed at providing officers with due process protections. These laws generally seek to:

- **Establish clear and uniform standards.** Some states have mandated uniform criteria for

Just the Facts:

» Few legal doctrines have had as profound an impact on law enforcement officers as *Brady v. Maryland*, 373 U.S. 83 (1963) and *Giglio v. United States*, 405 U.S. 150 (1972). While *Brady* and *Giglio* serve essential roles in ensuring fairness in criminal trials, their application to law enforcement officers has often led to unjust outcomes, particularly when officers are placed on *Giglio* lists without due process. The recent wave of state legislation represents an important step toward protecting officers from arbitrary or politically motivated career destruction while preserving prosecutorial obligations.

placing officers on *Giglio* lists, ensuring that only substantiated and serious credibility issues result in disclosure.

- **Provide due process rights.** New legislation in states such as Arizona and Florida requires that officers be notified and given an opportunity to contest their inclusion on a *Giglio* list before it becomes permanent.
- **Limit prosecutorial discretion.** Some states have proposed restrictions on when prosecutors can place officers on a *Giglio* list, requiring objective evidence of dishonesty rather than mere allegations.
- **Create appeals processes.** New laws in states like Tennessee and North Carolina have established formal mechanisms for officers to appeal *Giglio* designations before independent review boards.
- **Protect officers from unwarranted termination.** Recognizing that officers who are placed on *Giglio* lists often face termination, some states have sought to prohibit police departments from automatically firing officers based solely on their inclusion on such lists.

In Iowa, state law was amended to add a section to the officer’s bill of rights prohibiting an officer from being discharged, disciplined or threatened with discharge or discipline by a state, county or municipal law enforcement agency solely due to a prosecuting attorney making a determination or disclosure that exculpatory evidence exists concerning the officer.

In Arizona, state law was amended to require that before the prosecuting agency decides to place a law enforcement officer’s name in the Rule 15.1 database (*Giglio*), they must first send written notice to the law enforcement officer’s current or last known employment address at least 10 days prior to making that determination. The law prescribes certain minimum requirements for the notice, such as the law enforcement officer’s right to request relevant materials from the prosecuting agency; the law enforcement officer’s right to provide input before the prosecuting agency decides whether to add the law enforcement officer’s name to the database; and the procedural requirements the agency must follow for the law enforcement officer to submit their input.

Similar to Iowa’s law, Arizona law prohibits a law enforcement agency from using the placement of a law

enforcement officer's name in the Rule 15.1 database as the sole reason for taking or denying employment actions like demotion, suspension, termination or any other disciplinary measures.

Similar initiatives are being proposed across the country. Currently, there is a bill pending before the Indiana legislature to establish a procedure for placing a law enforcement officer's name on a *Giglio* list. The bill proposes similar provisions as those in Arizona law, requiring the prosecuting attorney to send a written notice to the officer's current or last known employer.

The notice must provide the officer the right to request relevant materials from the prosecuting attorney, the right to provide supplemental information to the prosecuting attorney and the right to request reconsideration as well as information about the reconsideration process.

While *Brady* and *Giglio* serve essential roles in ensuring fairness in criminal trials, their application to law enforcement officers has often led to unjust outcomes, particularly when officers are placed on *Giglio* lists without due process. The recent wave of state legislation represents an important step toward protecting officers from arbitrary or politically motivated



career destruction while preserving prosecutorial obligations.

As the legal landscape continues to evolve, law enforcement officers and their legal representatives must remain vigilant in advocating for policies that safeguard both constitutional rights and the integrity of the profession. By fostering a fair and transparent system, we can encourage that officers are not unfairly punished, while maintaining the trust and credibility necessary for effective law enforcement. **FOP**

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The FOP Is Many Things to Many People



As I have always said, the FOP is many things to many people. That mantra clearly rang true last month. February started out with our very important Day on the Hill event, where FOP leaders interested in the national political process assembled in Washington, D.C., for three days of political action.

A briefing took place at the National Law Enforcement Museum, where President Pat Yoes, Executive Director James Pasco and Senior Legislative Liaison Tim Richardson got everyone caught up to speed on where we stand with the new administration and our political agenda for the 119th congressional session. Afterward, attendees fanned out across the Hill on visits to their congressmen and senators. Our Legislative Committee, chaired by Mark Nelson, put together an excellent event.

After a brief recess, our Labor Services division hosted our very popular Labor Seminar, followed by our Legal Counselors Seminar in Las Vegas, Nevada. At these two events, our members and the attorneys who represent them assembled to learn and exchange ideas that are pertinent to the landscape of collective bargaining. An added bonus to the events was the appearance of Rick Smith, CEO and co-founder of Axon. These two back-to-back events offered our members and those who are potential members with exposure to trends in collective bargaining from across the country.

Attendance varied from new, young members eager to learn to seasoned labor veterans who were more than willing to share their knowledge. The networking opportunities were limitless! Labor Services Director Roger Mayberry coordinated this great event with the assistance of General Counsel Larry James. Guidance was provided by Labor Chairman Mike Powell and his committee, along with National office staff Toni Dixon.

On the heels of the labor and legal event was the Wellness Professionals' Forum in Nashville, Tennessee, where wellness practitioners and providers assemble for a one-day conference specifically geared to their needs and interests. Much like how we bring in our legal professionals to Vegas to learn and interact with one another, here, trained counselors assemble and receive continuing education credits in a similar fashion as our attorneys receive at the Vegas event. Many attendees stay on for the Wellness Summit that follows the next two days, where hundreds of law enforcement professionals assemble to learn about the many aspects of wellness. Attendance is not limited to just FOP members but is offered to any law enforcement professional, again similar to our Labor Services event. This year, Wellness Director Sherri Martin and her wellness committee did not disappoint!

After taking a half day off, on came Leadership Matters in the same venue as the Wellness Summit, where over 350 "FOP members only" assembled to learn the various skills of lodge management and leadership. Leadership Matters has been our premier training event for decades. Originally born from the need to train elected lodge secretaries and treasurers on the ins and outs of handling finances and the obligations related to running a lodge, this event has expanded well past its original concept. Attendees are now exposed to every aspect of the FOP, from how to participate in the Disaster Area Response Team (DART), to spirituality, to addressing insurance needs of our members, to one-on-one interaction with our entire Executive Board and staff. Leadership skills were emphasized in every aspect of the event.

If one missed our labor and legal seminars or our wellness event, condensed versions of each are provided at Leadership Matters. Chair Ron Bartmire and the Education Committee did an excellent job! Stephanie Simpson, our *FOP Journal* editor/seminar coordinator, had

a hand in most everything that took place over the last month and is truly an invaluable person to the FOP.

Of course, there were many others from our Nashville office who assisted in one form or another. It was great to see them all at Leadership Matters and receive accolades for their dedicated work.

Also, a loud shoutout to all our vendors who offered their services at the various events throughout February. As we attract new leaders to our events, it is rewarding to see that they can not only learn from the national FOP and one another, but also through the valuable information and services that are provided by our vendors. All our vendors have been fully vetted to ensure that what they provide has a value to our organization. Once again, we had to turn away vendors due to lack of space.

As I have said, the FOP is many things to many people. I can't imagine a topic or area of instruction that was not hit on this last month. No matter from what corner of the FOP you come from, there was something of value offered this last month. Yet, with the limited time we had, I'm sure something was missed. With that said, plans are already underway for next year's regiment of training. Stay tuned, as I hear next year will be better and bigger than this year.

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 Turnery at kturney@fop.org, or (815) 482-5620. For more information on CRI-TAC, visit cops.usdoj.gov/cri-tac.



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Webinars Coming Soon

As you know, the Division of Labor Services has been conducting industry-leading training for decades. We leverage the collective experience of a wide variety of instructors as well as the expertise of labor leaders and subject-matter experts from around the country. We also conduct on-site training upon request and regularly scheduled training in Las Vegas and at the FOP Biennial conferences.

We have received numerous requests for training in between our national and

In addition, there will be a series of webinars on collective bargaining issues and strategies.

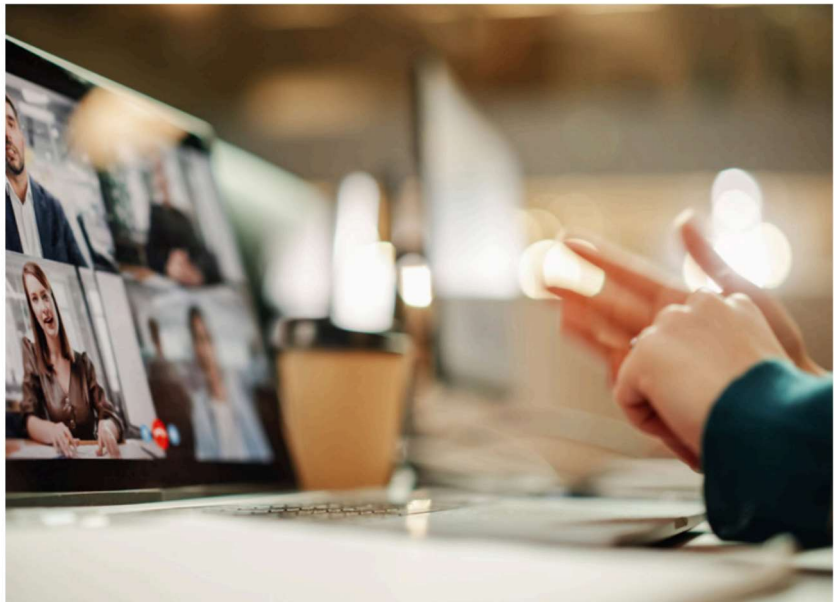
annual events on specific subjects. We know that traveling to training is not always convenient and hosting a training requires a lot of coordination and can present logistical challenges.

You asked for more, and we are delivering. The Labor Services Division has produced and will be delivering webinars in the coming months. These webinars will all be approximately one hour in length with time for questions and answers.

The topics include critical incidents, representing FOP members and grievances. In addition, there will be a series of webinars on collective bargaining issues and strategies. This series will include Becoming the Bargaining Agent; Preparing for Bargaining; Understanding

Just the Facts:

>> You asked for more, and we are delivering. The Labor Services Division has produced and will be delivering webinars in the coming months. These webinars will all be approximately one hour in length with time for questions and answers.



Employer Economics; Drafting Proposals; Bargaining Strategy and more.

These webinars are suitable for all experience levels, whether you are brand-new to law enforcement labor or a veteran who has been practicing in this arena for years. The question-and-answer segments will be open to all attendees, like having a personal trainer or coach.

Keep an eye out for upcoming announcements on specific topics, dates and times. Also, come join us at our annual Collective Bargaining Seminar and come see us at the Expo at the Biennial Conference in Miami this August. **FOP**



Scan the QR code for more information about NFOP Labor Services.



FOP Legal Defense Plan for Retired Officers

Retired officers are eligible for unlimited legal defense coverage for civil and criminal claims associated with the legal carrying and use of a concealed weapon.

Legal Defense Coverage has become even more of a necessity for retired law enforcement officers who are conceal carrying. That's why the FOP Legal Defense Plan offers the

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