

2024 MEMBER OF THE YEAR // P. 26

# FOP



# JOURNAL

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OCTOBER 2024

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Donald J. Trump Is the  
FOP's Choice for President  
to Uphold Public Safety

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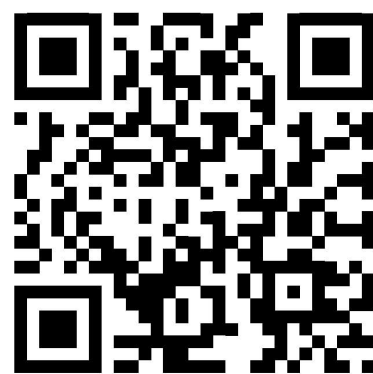
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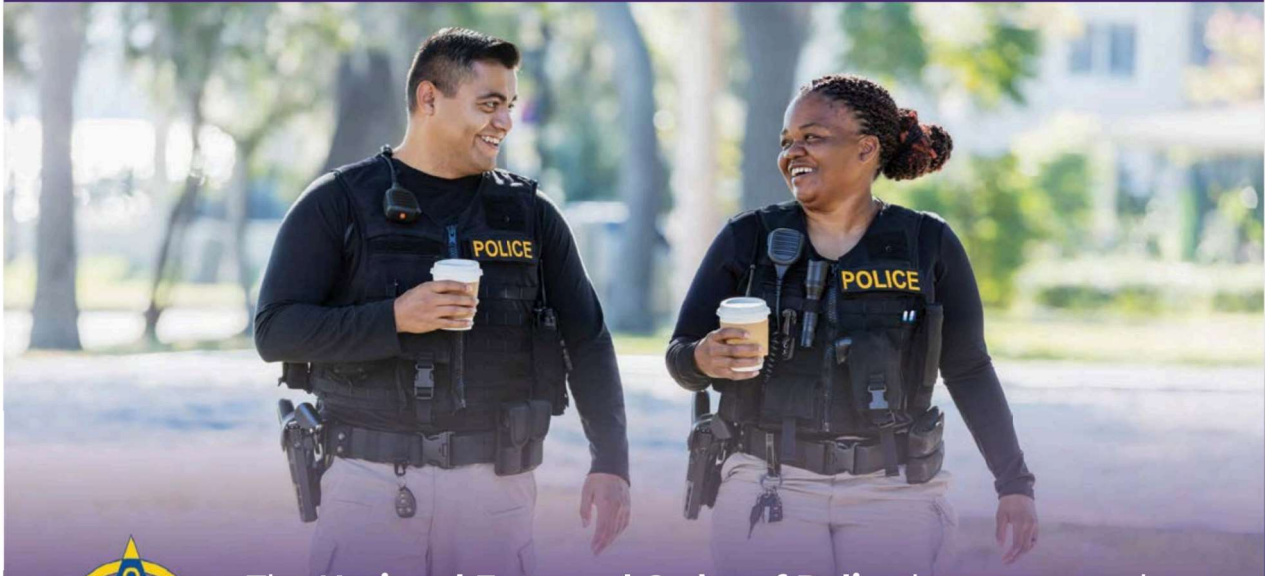
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# A Historic Step Toward Fairness



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

## Update on the Social Security Fairness Act

I am thrilled to share some significant news in our ongoing fight for justice for public servants. We have reached a pivotal moment in the struggle to repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO). Discharge Petition #16, enabling H.R. 82 — the Social Security Fairness Act — has garnered the necessary 218 signatures to be considered on the House floor. This achievement marks a critical step in addressing the inequities that millions of public servants, including our retired law enforcement officers, have endured for far too long.

For the first time in 40 years, the House is slated to vote on repealing these grossly unfair provisions that have stripped millions of public employees of their hard-earned benefits. This vote was slated to occur in the first week of October, but an agreement by the House to avert a government shutdown has allowed Congress to go into recess. The vote will now be pushed beyond November 8.

For over four decades, these provisions have stolen the benefits of millions of public servants under the guise of balancing the Social Security Trust Fund. Let me be clear: this is

not about the solvency of Social Security — it is theft. The Congressional Budget Office recently estimated that the cost of repealing WEP and GPO would be \$195.65 billion over the next decade. But that is not a cost — it is money rightfully owed to our public employees, money that continues to be stolen if this travesty persists.

The Fraternal Order of Police has been fighting to repeal these unfair provisions for nearly as long as they have existed. Now, we are closer than ever. This success is due in no small part to the leadership of Representatives Garret N. Graves (R-La.) and Abigail D. Spanberger (D-Va.), whose commitment has been instrumental in reaching this historic milestone. Their efforts underscore the bipartisan spirit required to champion this cause. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to them and all who have stood with us.

This victory is a testament to the strength of our grassroots efforts. I commend every one of you — our FOP members across the nation — who reached out to your elected representatives. Whether through calls, letters, emails or personal conversations, your advocacy has made a difference. This victory is a powerful reminder of what we can achieve together.

However, the path forward is not without its challenges. Securing a vote to repeal the WEP and GPO with a projected \$200 billion cost will not be easy. We are working closely with the bill's authors to adopt the best strategy moving forward, but there is something each of us can do: take the time to thank those who signed the petition and encourage their continued support.

Discharge petitions are rare and face significant hurdles. This is one of only a handful of successful petitions since World War II, showing the power of our collective voice. But our fight is far from over. The petition requires seven legislative days before it proceeds to a vote, and with the shutdown averted, Congress went into recess until November. While we've been assured there is no procedural way to block this critical issue, we must remain vigilant and ensure the Senate stands with us.

Additional information will be shared soon through your state lodges. For now, let us celebrate this monumental achievement. Well done and thank you for your unwavering commitment to this cause. Together, we are making history and ensuring that the rights and benefits of our members are rightfully restored. **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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# A Vote to Restore Law and Order

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

**G**reetings, my brothers and sisters. Fall is finally here, but we are still feeling the effects of a long, hot summer. We still have two more months of hurricane season, so stay prepared. Let us pray that we escape any major storms.

Last month, the North Carolina State Lodge hosted the fall National Board of Trustees meeting in the “Queen City” of Charlotte. I’ve been attending National Board meetings for over 30 years, and this past one was, without a doubt, the best board meeting ever. It was well attended, there was excitement, there was little controversy and you could feel the comradery in the room. Of course, we handled major business, including approving nine state lodges’ Constitution and By-Laws updates, approving four new programs for our members, honoring the Jack Dudek Member of the Year Award recipient and endorsing a candidate for president of the United States. We heard reports from Labor Services and the Legislative Committee, along with updates on pensions and legal services. I gave the National trustees my report on the National Office maintenance improvements completed or started, including new air handling units, reflective film on windows and roof replacement. In the evenings, the North Carolina State Lodge and Charlotte–Mecklenburg Lodge #9 entertained us with a tour of Hendricks Motorsports, dinner and a comedy show, and a visit to Charlotte Motor Speedway. A great meeting and a good time were had by all.



As you are aware, the National FOP has endorsed Donald Trump for president of the United States. The National FOP, for the most part, functions as a representative democracy — that is, local and state lodges govern themselves within the framework of the National FOP Constitution and By-Laws. The local and state lodges elect representatives to have their voices heard and vote on matters of concern in the operation of the National Lodge. These representatives are known as delegates to the state and national conferences and trustees to board meetings between conferences and at conferences. The endorsement process for president of the United States by the National FOP is mandated by Resolution

#1 from the 2001 National Conference held in Phoenix. The resolution requires that the National president and vice president appoint a screening committee that will devise a questionnaire and submit it to the presidential candidates. The committee will attempt to interview the candidates in person and will report their recommendations through the National Secretary’s Office for distribution to the membership. Each state lodge will devise a process for polling its members on who they recommend for endorsement or no endorsement. At the fall National Board of Trustees meeting in the year of the presidential election, the National Board of Trustees will vote on who the National FOP will endorse, which requires a two-thirds majority vote. This process was followed, but I think it needs to be modified so

that an endorsement can be given earlier in the presidential election season.

On September 6, at approximately 9:30 a.m., President Yoes called upon me to tally the vote for the endorsement of president of the United States. There are 46 state lodges, including the District of Columbia, and the result was 44 for Trump, 0 for Harris and 2 for no endorsement. President Yoes immediately issued a press release about the National FOP’s endorsement. Soon after, your National Executive Board began receiving some of the most disgusting and hateful emails imaginable. The emails were not from our members, but rather citizens expressing their vulgar distaste for our endorsement. Most claimed to be



family and friends of law enforcement or military veterans. Their message was in unison, using expletives, how could we endorse a convicted felon who was responsible for the January 6 insurrection and a racist? We did not respond to these messages, but I must ask, do we have trust in certain jurisdictions of our judicial system that indict law enforcement officers while lawfully performing their duties? Could it not be argued that Donald Trump has been prosecuted falsely by the same state or district attorneys that are anti-police? Do we believe the news reports from mainstream media outlets that portray Trump as the instigator of January 6, or do we believe our brothers and sisters from the U.S. Capitol Police and D.C. Metropolitan Police who were there and have told us what really happened? Is Donald Trump a racist, or is he simply not “word washing” and telling it like it is?

I was honored to meet one on one with Donald Trump before he spoke at the National Board meeting. I was surprised that he was engaging as he talked frankly about his support for America and, more specifically, law enforcement. He recognizes that we have a crisis in this country with crime, lack of prosecution of criminals, attracting and retaining qualified applicants to our noble profession, lack of respect for our officers and movements to eliminate qualified immunity. He was very different from what we see on TV or at his events. He was real. He was passionate. He was like talking to an old friend.

Over the past four years, we have seen wide-open borders, deaths due to illegal drugs, an upside-down economy and anti-police rhetoric. Are we better off today than we were four years ago? **No!** It is up to us to make a statement and a choice in our great nation’s leadership. Let’s get out the vote. Call your family and friends and get them to the polls. Let’s turn our nation around. Let’s be prosperous and free. Let’s restore law and order. Let’s take care of our families and community.

Per capita notices have gone out for the first half of 2025. Please check with your local lodge secretary to make your payment if needed. 2025 cards will be issued as soon as lodge per capita is received at the National Office.

Be safe out there, and I look forward to seeing you soon. **FOP**



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### FOP CALENDAR



#### **Collective Bargaining Seminar**

October 22–24, 2024  
Las Vegas, NV  
Info and registration:  
[national.fop.net/  
2024collectivebargaining](https://national.fop.net/2024collectivebargaining)

#### **Law Enforcement Leaders Labor Summit**

February 11–12, 2025  
Las Vegas, NV  
Info and registration:  
[national.fop.net/labor-2025](https://national.fop.net/labor-2025)

#### **Legal Counselors Seminar**

February 13–14, 2025  
Las Vegas, NV  
Info and registration:  
[national.fop.net/legal-2025](https://national.fop.net/legal-2025)

#### **Wellness Professionals Forum**

February 16, 2025  
Nashville, TN  
Save the date  
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[tinyurl.com/2025-wellness-  
summit-and-forum](https://tinyurl.com/2025-wellness-summit-and-forum)

#### **Officer Wellness Summit**

February 17–18, 2025  
Nashville, TN  
Save the date  
Call for presentations:  
[tinyurl.com/2025-wellness-  
summit-and-forum](https://tinyurl.com/2025-wellness-summit-and-forum)

#### **Leadership Matters**

February 20–22, 2025  
Nashville, TN  
Info and registration:  
[national.fop.net/  
2025leadershipmatters](https://national.fop.net/2025leadershipmatters)

## 2024 Collective Bargaining Seminar

**Horseshoe, Las Vegas, October 22–24**

Presented by the National FOP Labor Coalition, this seminar has been helping labor leaders and units stay on top of their game when it comes to bargaining for their members for the past 23 years! It offers tools for those who are new to collective bargaining and is also a great refresher for experienced negotiators. The seminar features hands-on training that combines role-playing activities with classroom instruction. Supported by experienced

National FOP negotiators, you will be engaged in using actual bargaining techniques and strategies in a classroom environment.

**Who should attend:** All law enforcement bargaining teams and those who desire to be on a law enforcement bargaining team. All individuals who need to learn the bargaining process in an environment that promotes and teaches good bargaining strategies and tactics.

Limited seating available! Register today at [national.fop.net/2024collectivebargaining](https://national.fop.net/2024collectivebargaining).

## 2025 Law Enforcement Leaders Labor Summit and Legal Counselors Seminar

**Planet Hollywood, Las Vegas, February 11–12 and February 13–14**

Register now! The Labor Summit will be held February 11–12, and the Legal Seminar will follow on February 13–14. These events will feature presentations and discussions on a wide variety of issues and topics that impact law enforcement labor leaders and legal counselors and the officers they represent. Attendees of the Legal Seminar will be able to earn up to 12 CLE credits. Info and registration at [national.fop.net/labor-2025](https://national.fop.net/labor-2025) and [national.fop.net/legal-2025](https://national.fop.net/legal-2025).

#### **Topics and Discussions**

- Developments in public safety labor issues
- Artificial intelligence and law enforcement policy
- Panel discussion on current labor issues and negotiations



- Improving the future of policing
- Artificial intelligence in policing today
- Overview and update on civilian review boards
- The “just cause” standard
- Decisions regarding police actions
- General counsel comprehensive overview on issues affecting law enforcement **FOP**



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## UPCOMING COURSES

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GREENSBORO, NC

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**MANAGEMENT OF THE SMALL  
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FOLLY BEACH, SC

NOVEMBER 11-15, 2024  
**PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT,  
ASSESSMENT & LIABILITY**  
FLETCHER, NC

NOVEMBER 18-22, 2024  
**SEX CRIMES INVESTIGATIONS**  
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## ILLINOIS

## It's Time to Wake Up and Get Back to the Basics

JENNIFER WARD // IL FOP  
CORRECTIONS LODGE #263

It's no secret to experienced correctional professionals that issues have been boiling nationally, and now they have seemingly hit the point where the pot is boiling over.

All the work done in decades past to gain and maintain control of facilities is a distant memory that few officers still working recall, but those of us who do have those vivid recollections have feared the decline that is now apparent, and it's not slight — it's volcanic. Drug use, exposures, hospital trips, staff assaults and homicides are a few of the now-daily occurrences in Illinois and across the nation.

What caused the recent eruption that boots-on-the-ground officers have been steadily warning about? Appointments of inexperienced administrators and anti-accountability, pro-inmate, anti-law-enforcement, pro-social-justice rhetoric are common themes and contributing factors to the issues we are all facing. There are too many appointees worried about looking good and not allowing the follow-through with the basics of the job at hand.

**Safety and security should not be negotiable, nor should hiding the realities of corrections to keep up with a political facade. It is time to wake up and get back to the basics!**

Sure, there is some reality that we must face, the technology reality, but in that reality is positive support and forward movement in maintaining the safety and security of the most critical piece of the criminal justice system, our nation's prisons.

There is also the reality of legislation, the negative that we must work around or within the confines of, and the positive that allows us the support and mostly the stability that a law can't just be changed as easily as a policy that gets altered each time

there is an administration change.

But back to the basics, the foundation to secure facilities: the basics of the officer's job inside a prison, which we all know. It's these basics of the job description that deter the volcanic eruption on a large scale. It's important to be reminded or understand the consequences of not just performing the job's basics.

When the basics are moved away from, it is noticed. We are in the business of securing manipulative, sophisticated criminals, and one of the first subjects we learn in the academy is the efforts of manipulation of the inmate, along with the fact that they watch and learn all day long as a way to solidify their manipulation strategies. When we quit holding inmates accountable for violations of rules, when we quit using disciplinary measures such as segregation, we wake the "eye of the tiger," an inmate population that is determined, intense and has a do-or-die attitude.

Solutions are only as good as the administrators and legislators who support and implement them. We need to get back to the basics with some assistance of updated technology. A lot of the issues can be stopped by the example we set showing we are doing our job. Fewer visitors and staff would attempt to traffic if they know we are searching and holding them accountable if they do. Proper staffing levels are needed to conduct proper ongoing searches of offenders, staff, visitors and the facility's physical plant. Regular use of trained detection dogs and



state-of-the-art detection technology to assist staff in their searches and screening are imperative to maintain safety and control, and ultimately to save lives.

### Navigating the Technological Frontier in Correctional Facilities

In the ever-evolving landscape of correctional management, the integration of cutting-edge technology with time-tested methods has become a critical focus. While innovative solutions offer promising answers to longstanding challenges, **it's crucial to remember that the**

Continued on page 18 >



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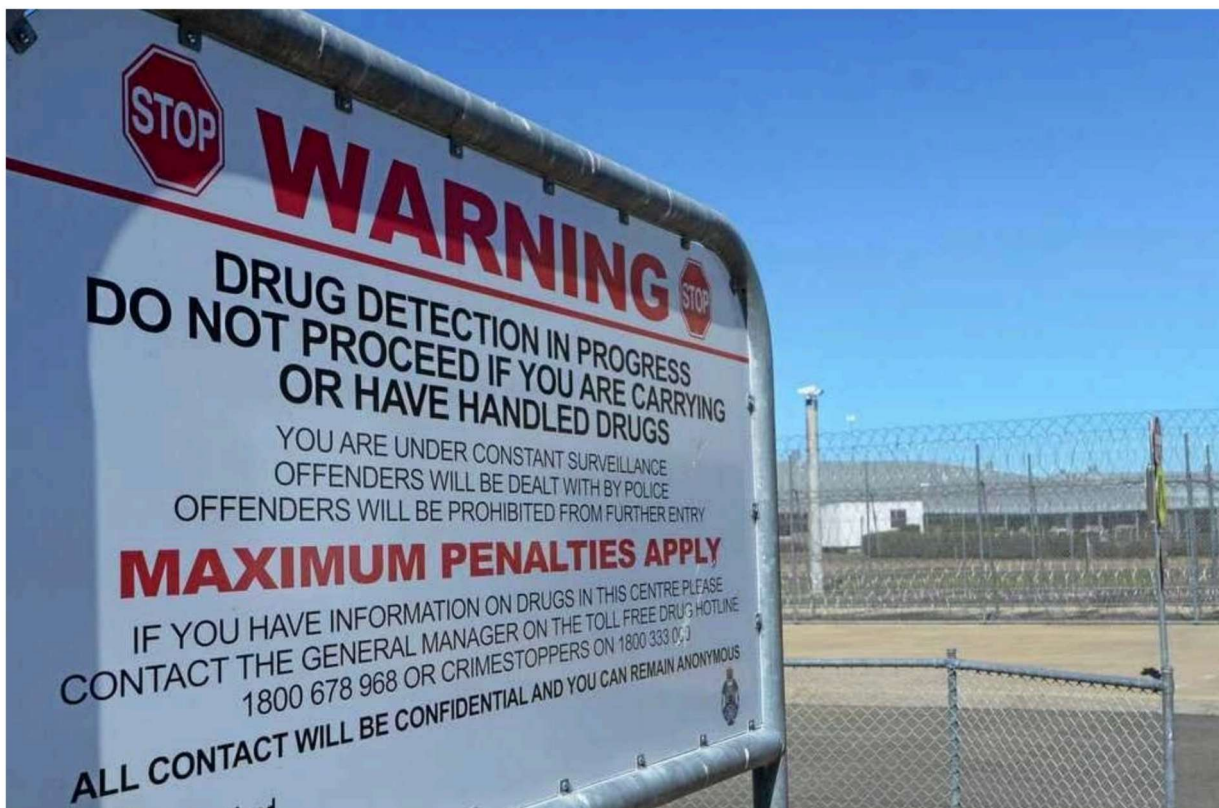
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## LOCAL LODGE NEWS

Continued from page 16 >

**fundamentals of correctional work remain essential for maintaining order and safety within these institutions.**

### The Escalating Challenge of Contraband

Correctional facilities face an ongoing battle against the influx of illicit items, including weapons, drugs and unauthorized communication devices. As traditional trafficking methods become more sophisticated, a new threat has emerged on the horizon: drones. These unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) pose a unique challenge, capable of bypassing physical barriers and delivering contraband with unprecedented ease.

### Drones: A Multifaceted Threat

The rise of drone technology in correctional settings has sparked intense research and development efforts. The National Institute of Justice's Criminal Justice Testing and Evaluation Consortium has been

at the forefront, providing crucial insights.

#### 1. Threat assessment challenges:

The novelty of drone threats makes it difficult to accurately gauge their full extent and potential impact.

#### 2. Adapting military solutions:

Many existing drone detection systems are designed for military applications, making them ill-suited for the unique needs and constraints of correctional environments.

#### 3. Lack of standardization:

The correctional system has yet to develop comprehensive guidelines for drone detection and mitigation, leaving individual facilities to navigate these challenges largely on their own.

### The Quest for Effective Detection

In the search for reliable detection methods, it should be emphasized that **no single technology offers a complete solution. Instead, a multi-layered approach** combining

various detection methods along with the tried-and-true, hands-on, back-to-the-basics approach shows the most promise. This strategy helps overcome the limitations of individual technologies and addresses the diverse environmental components this culture exudes.

The challenge for correctional staff is further complicated by the rapid advancements in techniques and technology and the lack of support from administration or legislators in addressing these issues.

### Quantifying the Threat

Accurately assessing the scope of the threat has proven challenging. Official reports, or lack thereof, have likely underestimated the true extent of the problem due to inconsistent reporting practices. Factors contributing to this uncertainty include implementation of changes in formal reporting protocols. Interestingly, out of safety concern, facility staff have begun to implement their own means of communication

Continued on page 20 >



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## LOCAL LODGE NEWS

Continued from page 18 >

and are consistently reporting a significant increase in exposures, hospitalizations and assaults, suggesting that the current threats may be more pervasive than was initially thought or is being officially reported.

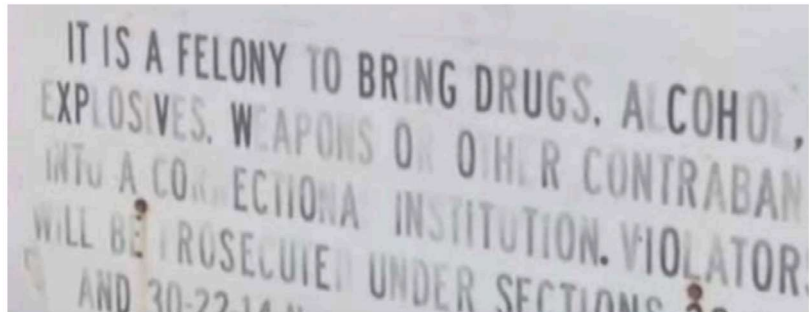
### A Strategic Approach to Drug Contraband Management

To effectively address the threat, correctional facilities are advised to adopt a three-pronged strategy:

1. **Detection:** Combine human observation and searches with advanced sensor technologies to create a layered detection system.
2. **Response:** Develop protocols for assessing detected threats, intercepting contraband and gathering evidence for potential legal action.
3. **Proactive countermeasures:** Develop comprehensive interdiction/management plans in consultation with relevant technology companies and agencies to ensure legal compliance and operational effectiveness.

### Balancing Technology and Tradition

While the focus on drone threats and creative trafficking efforts



highlights the need for technological solutions, it's crucial not to overlook other essential aspects of correctional security. Traditional methods and fundamental practices remain vital:

- Continued use of detection dogs for identifying contraband
- Continued use of human observation and searches
- Implementation of body cameras for officer safety, support and a record for accountability
- Deployment of advanced drug detection equipment
- Exploration of cellphone jamming technologies

### In Closing

The challenge of maintaining security in correctional facilities is evolving rapidly, driven by technological advancements on both sides of the security equation. While

drones represent a significant new threat, they are just one aspect of a complex security landscape. **Success in this era will require a balanced approach that leverages cutting-edge technology while maintaining a strong foundation in traditional correctional practices.**

As the field continues to evolve, ongoing research, interagency collaboration and adaptive strategies will be crucial. Correctional leaders must be experienced, communicate transparently and stay informed about the latest developments in security issues and technology while ensuring their staff are well-trained, supported and equipped to face both current and emerging threats. By embracing innovation while holding fast to proven principles, correctional facilities can enhance their security posture and better fulfill their mission in an increasingly complex culture. **FOP**



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## FLORIDA

### Florida State Lodge President Steve Zona Retiring

**JIMMY HOLDERFIELD //**  
NATIONAL SECRETARY

At the Florida State Lodge fall Board of Trustees meeting held September 11–14 in St. Petersburg, State Lodge President Steve Zona announced his retirement as president effective October 1. Brother Zona served as the secretary of Jacksonville Lodge #5-30 and as its president, representing over 4,300 members consisting of six law enforcement bargaining units with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office. He was instrumental in creating the Jacksonville Police and Fire Insurance Trust, which has resulted in thousands of dollars in savings for medical care for active-duty officers and retirees. He also serves on the Jacksonville FOP Foundation, where he advocates for financial assistance for members injured or killed in the line of duty.

Steve also served as the Florida District 2 director as part of the Florida State Lodge Executive Board, where he was responsible for 20 counties in the Northeast Florida region. His duties included legislative work, contract negotiations, legal services, grievance resolution and disaster relief. He was the catalyst in securing PTSD provisions for Florida's first responders through the Florida Legislature. In 2019, he was recognized by the Florida State Lodge as Member of the Year.

Steve was elected as president of the Florida State Lodge in 2020. During his tenure, he held a command presence at the State Capitol, having the ear of Governor Ron DeSantis, the speaker of the House and the president of the Senate. He was instrumental in passing legislation enhancing penalties for injuring or killing law enforcement K-9s, eliminating civilian review boards and creating the Halo Act, which makes it a criminal offense for anyone to



interfere within 25 feet of a law enforcement officer performing their duties. He was also recognized by the National FOP as the recipient of the Jack Dudek Award in 2020. Most recently, he secured two container trailers and had them converted into bunkhouses, complete with A/C and restrooms, to make them ready to deploy for disaster relief.

Brother Zona will continue in his role as business agent of Jacksonville

Lodge #5-30 and his participation on the National FOP Social Media Committee. He is looking forward to enjoying more time hunting and spending quality time with his wife and family. **FOP**



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## NORTH CAROLINA

### Iredell County Lodge Dedicates Fallen Officers Memorial

**CHARLES KURFEES** // NC FOP  
LODGE #10 SECRETARY

The Iredell County Lodge #10 Memorial is located at 239 Wing Drive in Statesville, N.C., just as you pull into our gate, and it is Iredell County's monument to law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty. Dedicated on May 21, 2024, the Memorial honors all officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our safety and protection.

Our Memorial features a black granite headstone. Carved into it are the names of 12 heroes who died in the line of duty from Iredell County, dating back to the first known death on June 30, 1917. Unlike many other memorials, unfortunately this Memorial will be ever-changing over time with officers' names being added.

Designed by a committee of board members and active members of the lodge, the Memorial was developed after numerous months of work and dedication to make sure it represented our heroes



well for years to come. The location of the Memorial was picked so that when you enter our gate or exit our building, the first thing you will see is our heroes standing guard.

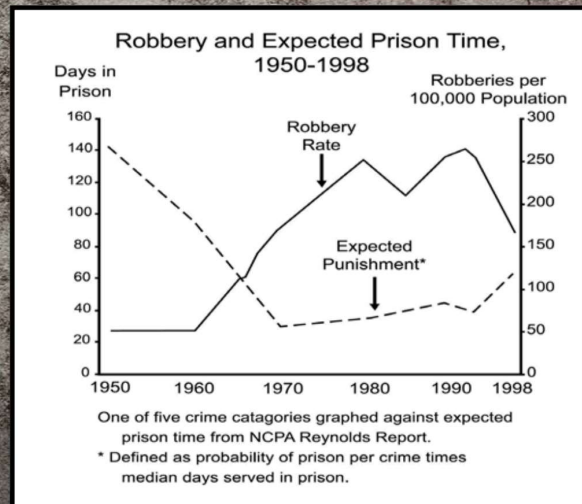
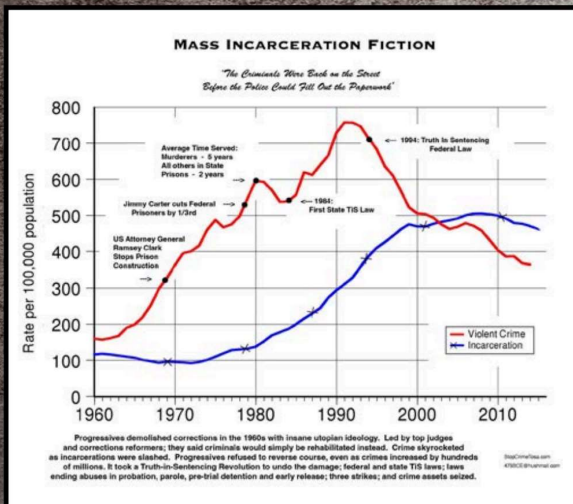
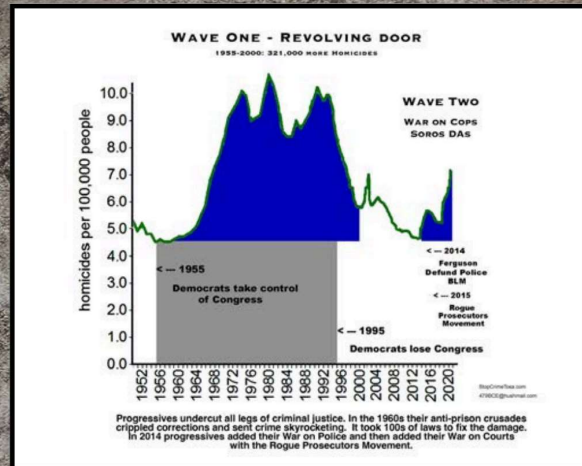
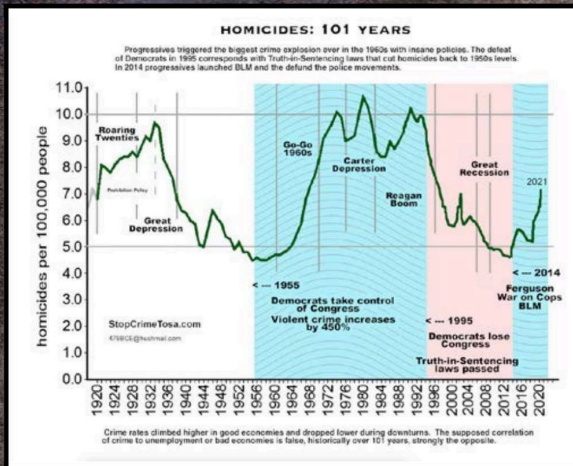
At the back of the Memorial are numerous plants and trees selected to enhance the site year-round. In the center

of the Memorial is a three-foot circular piece of granite with the Fraternal Order of Police logo laser-etched into it in honor of the FOP. There are two benches at the Memorial for you to just come and honor the heroes. Every year there will be a ceremony here to honor all law enforcement officers in the month of May. **FOP**





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## 2024 FOP Member of the Year **Andy Maybo**



This year's recipient of the Jack Dudek Member of the Year Award is Andy Maybo from Washington, D.C. Andy began his law enforcement career in 1999 with the United States Capitol Police (USCP). He has assisted with six presidential inaugurations and numerous lying-in-states, was the initial police responder to the shooting of Congressman Steve Scalise, was present for the 9/11 and anthrax attacks and has received countless lifesaving awards while on duty. He is one of the most decorated officers on USCP and was even named Officer of the Year in 2012.

Andy has been involved with the FOP since 1999. He moved up the ranks of the USCP FOP Labor Committee and was elected as labor chair for the Capitol Police in 2004. During his tenure, which lasted until 2007, he made many positive changes, including negotiating a contract and starting the USCP Scholarship program for officers' children, which is still active today. He later went on to become the vice president of Washington, D.C., FOP Lodge #1, where he served for eight years before becoming president in 2014. During this time, he played an integral part in many lodge committees, including the D.C. FOP Gifts for Kids program and the D.C. Disaster Aid Response Team (DART). He was a key volunteer member for the lodge fundraising committee and was extremely active with the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Andy spent hundreds, if not thousands, of hours of his personal time ensuring the business of the Order never faltered. He still serves on the Board of Directors for D.C. Lodge #1 and holds the position of immediate past president.

In 2006, Andy was assigned to the National FOP Memorial Committee. In 2008, he was appointed as the committee chair. He was chosen for his strong sense of leadership and unity, knowledge of proper security protocols at the U.S. Capitol and ability to forge strong bonds with law enforcement agencies across the country. During his time as chair, Andy dedicated countless hours to ensuring the surviving families of the nation's fallen officers were properly honored. He continued to mentor future committee members, fostered camaraderie within the committee and strived to lead his committee in making each year's Police Week better than the year before. In 2022, he stepped down as chair and was named to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Names Committee, which approves all names to be inscribed on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial.

Andy has also been appointed to numerous Department of Justice committees and continues to serve as the longest-serving board member of the Congressional Badge of Bravery selection board. He still serves as a volunteer for countless organizations and recently has been involved with REBOOT, a faith-based, peer-led course that helps first responders and their families heal from critical incident stress and trauma. Brother Maybo never stops helping cops and his community. His selfless service to anyone in need is beyond reproach.

The FOP is proud to present Andy Maybo with the 2024 Jack Dudek Member of the Year Award. Congratulations! **FOP**



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# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR INDUCTS FOP INTO CENTURY OF SERVICE HONOR ROLL

Acting Secretary Julie Su and the U.S. Department of Labor paid tribute to nine labor unions representing nearly three million members, retirees and their families that have fought for workers' rights for more than 100 years and inducted them on September 17, 2024, into the department's Century of Service Honor Roll of American Labor Organizations ([dol.gov/general/aboutdol/history/century](https://dol.gov/general/aboutdol/history/century)).

The newest additions to the honor roll are the American Train Dispatchers Association, Fraternal Order of Police, International Association of Fire Fighters, International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees, National Federation of Federal Employees, National Postal Mail Handlers Union, Service Employees International Union and United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers.



Secretary Holderfield and Legislative Liaison Tim Richardson with the award



President Yoes receiving recognition



President Yoes being called to the stage by Labor Secretary Julie Su



“For over 100 years, these unions have made our communities strong by delivering the mail, keeping us safe, making sure our trains and planes are running, delivering federal services, caring for our loved ones, building our homes and then protecting them from fires, and leading the charge for social, economic and racial justice,” Su said. “The work done by these unions doesn’t just write a chapter in the story of labor. It is the spine of the book in a story that continues to be written.”

After the induction, Su led a panel discussion on the labor movement’s future and how to build on worker equity to create a multiracial, multicultural, multilingual, multigenerational movement that benefits all workers. The discussion highlighted commitments unions have made at the national and local levels to foster a diverse workforce, including pledging to increase the percentage of women in the building trades and establish committees for underrepresented workers to involve them in their local union’s work.

The panelists included the following union leaders:

- AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler
- AFL-CIO Secretary–Treasurer Fred Redmond
- Service Employees International Union President April Verrett
- International Union of Painters and Allied Trades General Vice President Liz McElroy
- United Brotherhood of Carpenters’ Sisters in the Brotherhood Director Sandra Rodriguez

National FOP President Pat Yoes, accompanied by National FOP Secretary Jimmy Holderfield, Legislative Executive Director Jim Pasco and Legislative Liaison Tim Richardson, received this prestigious award. President Yoes was thanked for the FOP’s “Century of Service” in securing better wages, benefits and working conditions for the nation’s law enforcement profession. **FOP**



President Yoes sitting with other “Century of Service” union leaders



Secretary Holderfield, Executive Director Pasco and President Yoes in front of the Labor “Wall of Honor”

# It's the Month for Boos! Booze, You Said? Hmm, Let's Talk About That ...

SHERRI MARTIN / DIRECTOR OF WELLNESS

**F**or as long as most of us can remember, the consumption of alcoholic beverages has been part of law enforcement culture. Although those newer to the job may not be familiar with the term “choir practice,” many of us have certainly heard stories about the more noteworthy gatherings, and some of us personally have memories of those “special” after-shift parties. These are stories built on time spent bonding with our brothers and sisters while decompressing from long shifts, all revolving around shared beverages.

However, most all of us in law enforcement also know the other side of that coin. We can recall a time when alcohol has been the root of negative consequences for a brother or sister in blue, or even for ourselves. So how does “one or two” turn into “too many”? And how do we know if we are consuming too much?

First, let us get into some hard facts and data about alcohol.

Alcohol affects every body system and has been associated with over 200 diseases and injury-related health conditions. Long-term misuse of alcohol can lead to high blood pressure, kidney disease, weight gain, gastrointestinal issues, memory loss, sleep disorders, issues with blood sugar, high cholesterol and more. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and

***How does “one or two”  
turn into “too many”?  
And how do we know  
if we are consuming  
too much?***

Alcoholism rates alcohol as the third leading cause of preventable death in the United States.

Misuse and abuse of alcohol can affect relationships with others. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), alcohol is responsible for 50% of marital separations and is a significant factor in divorce. Over 48% of people diagnosed with alcohol use



disorder (AUD) have been divorced at least once. Quite simply, alcohol can impair judgment and decision-making, leading to a range of negative behaviors that can include aggression and even violence.

But none of this is really a surprise to us, is it? If you have been on the job for any length of time, you have responded to calls for service on duty where alcohol took control and things got out of hand. We have all handled those calls.

Ask yourself: When things get out of hand in our own lives or the lives of our brothers and sisters and alcohol is the culprit, how do we handle it then? Do we confront our friends when we see that they may be drinking too much? Do we look at our own drinking and evaluate whether we are consuming at an unhealthy level? Do we even know the signs that casual drinking may be turning the corner into a danger zone?

Here are some key questions to ask:

- What are the benefits of drinking versus not drinking?
- How might life change or improve if I stopped drinking?
- Is drinking in line with my values or vision for my life?
- How is drinking impacting my relationships?
- Is my level of drinking impacting my work?

Sometimes reflecting on your hopes, goals and aspirations for your life can be enough to evaluate and assess whether your level of drinking is appropriate and comfortable for you. But it may take a little more digging if there is uncertainty. Many self-assessment tools can be found online that can help assess whether drinking is having a detrimental effect on or taking control of your life in negative ways.

Ask this: If you had to go completely alcohol-free, could you do it?

If the answer is no, the time to take the next step is **now**. Do not wait another day to support the brother or sister who is struggling with it. If it is you or someone in your family who is struggling with alcohol, there is absolutely no shame in seeking help for it. You would do it if someone you loved was struggling with any other illness!

The FOP can help. Our Division of Wellness Services is committed to locating and vetting wellness programs and providers that are experienced in working with first responders who might be struggling with alcohol. The FOP Approved Provider Bulletin

([fop.net/officer-wellness/providers](http://fop.net/officer-wellness/providers)) is a nationwide directory of over 100 providers and programs ready to help our members, and every resource in the directory has been vetted by our National Officer Wellness Committee. These are compassionate individuals who understand law enforcement culture, trauma and the stigma that some may still fear if they reach out for help.

The takeaway? We each have two jobs to do. First, think about your brothers and sisters in law enforcement and consider whether anyone in your circle shows signs of struggling with misuse of alcohol. Identify the signs and have the courage to have a conversation with them about it. It could ultimately save their job, their relationships or their life. Second, if you drink, consider your own level of drinking. Is it causing negative effects in your life? We all deserve to live the best, healthiest lives possible. Think about it, make the assessments and take the steps. We are always here to give you a hand. **FOP**

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# Discharge Petition Success!

The FOP can proudly report that Discharge Petition #16, which will allow H.R. 82, the Social Security Fairness Act, to be considered on the House floor, reached the required 218 signatures — just over a week after the petition was filed!

Describing it as a “momentous occasion,” National President Patrick Yoes thanked all FOP members who reached out to their representatives and described our campaign as a “demonstration of the power of the FOP’s grassroots.”

The petition discharges a rule, H. Res. 1410, to the House floor that provides for the consideration of H.R. 82. The petition will need to “ripen” for several legislative days before the bill can proceed to a vote, and it is not clear if the House will remain in session long enough for the bill to reach the floor prior to the election. However, according to Representatives Graves and Spanberger, there does not seem to be any procedural way to stop this vote from happening. It will just be a question of timing, so please be sure to monitor the FOP’s website and social media platforms for the very latest information!

We are also urging all FOP members to thank those representatives who signed the petition and check in with their respective representatives in order to get commitments that they will vote in favor of H.R. 82 when it comes to the floor. You can call, fax, email or use the FOP’s Action Center at [votervoice.net/FOP/Campaigns/71899/Respond](https://votervoice.net/FOP/Campaigns/71899/Respond). Let’s keep our momentum going!

In the Senate, the Social Security Fairness Act has the support of 62 members — a filibuster-proof majority. The Washington, D.C., staff are in regular communication with the lead sponsors of S. 597, Senators Sherrod C. Brown (D-Ohio) and Susan M. Collins (R-Maine), to determine how to best maximize our chances of getting the legislation to the floor of the Senate.

## Just the Facts:

» A discharge petition that will allow the Social Security Fairness Act to be considered on the House floor has reached the required number of signatures. The FOP encourages all members to thank the signers of the petition and ask their representatives to commit to voting in favor of H.R. 82. The FOP was also successful in including a number of key provisions in the “manager’s package” of amendments to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025. After passing a continuing resolution to avert a partial shutdown and fund the federal government through December 20, the House and Senate will recess until after the election.

## FOP’s Model Questionnaire for 2024 Still Available!

A model questionnaire ([tinyurl.com/2rtax8rc](https://tinyurl.com/2rtax8rc)), developed by the staff in the Steve Young Law Enforcement Legislative Advocacy Center, is still available to assist state and local lodges in evaluating federal candidates for the U.S. Congress in the 2024 election cycle. The questions are drawn from the issues and legislation being actively lobbied by the National FOP in Washington, D.C., and include all of our top legislative priorities.

It is important that state and local lodges endorse candidates who support our top priorities, like the Social Security Fairness Act, and publicly oppose those candidates who do not. The success of the National Legislative Program depends on having an active grassroots base and electing lawmakers who support our pro-law-enforcement agenda.

If your state or local lodges do make an endorsement, please contact the National Legislative Office and let us know!

## Appropriations: Partial Government Shutdown Averted?

The U.S. House of Representatives returned to session after its August recess having adopted only five appropriations bills.

The federal government’s fiscal year ends on September 30, which led House leadership to draft a “stopgap” funding bill to keep the government operating after the deadline.

The initial effort failed, with the House rejecting H.R. 9494, the Continuing Appropriations and Other Matters Act, on a 202–220 vote, with 14 Republicans joining all the Democrats in voting down the measure. This legislation would have extended government funding at current levels through March 28, 2025, and included several unrelated measures like the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act and an extension of the National Flood Insurance Program.

The House and Senate are now working on a “clean” continuing resolution that would fund the federal government through December 20, 2024. Once this measure is adopted, we expect Congress to recess until after the election.

## Future Legislation: NDAA

The Senate Committee on Armed Services released its “manager’s package” — a package of 93 amendments included in S. 4638, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025. The FOP can report that we were successful in our efforts to include the following legislation in the manager’s package:



- S. 645, the Fighting Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Act, which would direct the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to develop a state-of-the-art treatment program for public safety officers experiencing acute stress disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or similar conditions
- S.994, the Strong Communities Act, which would help build on the community policing model by establishing a grant program for local law enforcement agencies to assist in recruiting officers from their own community
- S. 1170, the Project Safe Childhood Act, which updates and expands provisions included in the original Project Safe Childhood initiative launched by the DOJ
- S.1387, the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program Authorization Act,

which would reauthorize critical funding and support for local law enforcement agencies and community organizations that help reduce violent crime and enhance public safety

- S. 2644, the American Law Enforcement Sustaining Aid and Vital Emergency Resources (SAVER) Act, a bill developed by the FOP that would expand the existing Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne-JAG) program to allow for the purchase of trauma kits
- S. 3687, the Preventing Child Trafficking Act, which would direct the Office for Victims of Crime in the DOJ to implement anti-trafficking recommendations of the Government Accountability Office
- S. 3859, the Justice for Murder Victims Act, which would allow a prosecution to be instituted for any federal homicide offense without regard to the time that

elapsed between the act or omission that caused the death of the victim

The FOP will continue its efforts to ensure these provisions are included in the final bill, which will not be considered until after the election.

The FOP had been pushing for the inclusion of a few additional measures that were not included:

- S. 993, the Combating Illicit Xylazine Act, which would add xylazine to the Controlled Substances Act, listing it as a Schedule III drug for illicit use
- S. 1144, the Invest to Protect Act, which would establish a grant program, administered by the Community Oriented Policing Services Office within the U.S. Department of Justice, that would be used for the training of officers from police departments and

Continued on page 34 >

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](http://fopconnect.com/education-connect/about-the-consortium).



Charles Town, WV



San Diego, CA



Arlington, VA



Fayette, IA



Ashland, OH



Rosemont, PA



Adelphi, MD



Minneapolis, MN



Orange Beach, AL



Tiffin, OH



San Diego, CA



Wichita, KS



Romeoville, IL



Cincinnati, OH



Williamsburg, KY

## Top Priorities in Brief

### **H.R. 82/S. 597, the Social Security Fairness Act**

**House:** 329 co-sponsors (119 R, 210 D)

**Senate:** 62 co-sponsors (46 D, 13 R, 3 I)

Urge Congress to pass it:  
[tinyurl.com/ycxk6pay](https://tinyurl.com/ycxk6pay)

### **H.R. 1322/S. 1658, the Law Enforcement Officers' Equity Act**

**House:** 88 co-sponsors (23 R, 65 D)

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

Urge Congress to pass it:  
[tinyurl.com/37afz34h](https://tinyurl.com/37afz34h)

### **H.R. 3539, the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act**

**House:** 66 co-sponsors (52 R, 14 D)

**Senate:** Not yet introduced

Urge Congress to pass it:  
[tinyurl.com/5h6mtmvt](https://tinyurl.com/5h6mtmvt)

### **H.R. 354/S. 1462, the LEOSA Reform Act**

**House:** 43 co-sponsors (43 R)

**Senate:** 8 co-sponsors (8 R)

Urge Congress to pass it:  
[tinyurl.com/3w4br4sj](https://tinyurl.com/3w4br4sj)

### **H.R. 743/S. 4258, the Protect and Serve Act**

**House:** 117 co-sponsors (101 R, 16 D)

**Senate:** 20 co-sponsors (19 R, 1 D)

Urge Congress to pass it:  
[tinyurl.com/3uzdafpk](https://tinyurl.com/3uzdafpk)

### **H.R. 3170/S. 1514, the Homes for Every Local Protector, Educator, and Responder (HELPER) Act**

**House:** 143 co-sponsors (46 R, 97 D)

**Senate:** 27 co-sponsors (7 R, 19 D, 1 I)

Urge Congress to pass it:  
[tinyurl.com/48vxkdp4](https://tinyurl.com/48vxkdp4)

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

## WASHINGTON REPORT

*Continued from page 33 >*

municipalities that employ fewer than 200 law enforcement officers

The FOP also pressed for the inclusion of S. 930, the Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act, in the Senate's NDAA draft. The bill was favorably reported by the Committee on the Judiciary on a unanimous vote. The leadership of both the Committees on Armed Services and Judiciary had signed off on including the bill in the NDAA, as did the Senate majority leader. Senator Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), the minority leader, raised concerns about the cost of the bill, which would expand the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) program to include law enforcement and public safety officers who are exposed to certain carcinogens and die or who are disabled as a result of that exposure. Despite a push led by the FOP and IACP, Senator McConnell's objections were enough to keep the bill out of the manager's package. The FOP is working with the bill's sponsors and other key allies to find a different way forward on the legislation.

### Other Legislative Updates

The House Committee on Ways and Means considered, amended and favorably reported H.R. 3269, the Law Enforcement Innovate to De-Escalate Act, on a 21–16 vote. The bill, which the FOP supports, would exempt less-than-lethal projectile devices and their ammunition from excise taxes imposed on firearms. It would define less-than-lethal devices as those intended to launch a projectile no faster than 500 feet per second and designed to be used in a manner unlikely to kill or cause serious injury. The measure now proceeds to the House floor, but it is unlikely to get a vote prior to the election.

The House Committee on the Judiciary considered and favorably reported H.J. Res. 144, which provides for Congressional Disapproval of the rule adopted by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) to the "Definition of 'Engaged in the Business' as a Dealer in Firearms." The new rule, which went into effect in May, expands and clarifies the definition of a firearms dealer.

### Other Legislative Activity

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

- **H.R. 8992/S. 3591**, the Stop Fentanyl at the Border Act, which would provide over \$5 billion in funding to U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to support border operations and drug interdiction efforts
  - **H.R. 9390**, the Supporting Opportunities to Build Everyday Responsibility (SOBER) Act, which would expand a grant program for 24/7 sobriety programs
  - **H.R. 9641/S. 5060**, the Protect Our Children Act, which would reauthorize the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force program for three years
  - **S. 4970**, the Female Officers Ballistic Protection Act, which would ensure that female agents and officers of the federal government are issued body armor that best aligns with their figure
  - **S. 5056**, the Stop the Importation and Manufacturing of Synthetic Analogues (SIMSA) Act, which will add a Schedule A to the existing five schedules of the Controlled Substances Act, allowing synthetic analogues to be prohibited
  - **S. 5128**, the Interdiction of Fentanyl in Postal Mail at Federal Prisons Act, which would authorize the director of the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) to evaluate correctional facilities' capabilities to protect staff and detainees from exposure to synthetic drugs and opioids and implement appropriate protective measures as a result of the findings
- To see a full list of legislation supported by the FOP, please visit [fop.net/government-and-media-affairs/legislation-we-support](https://fop.net/government-and-media-affairs/legislation-we-support). Members should continue to monitor the FOP's social media platforms and our website for the latest legislative news! To send a message to your members of Congress asking them to support FOP priority legislation, visit [votervoice.net/FOP/home](https://votervoice.net/FOP/home).

### The Latest News From the Hill Is in 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](https://tinyurl.com/FOP-weekly-update) to sign up. It helps to keep you and your members up to date with the latest news from Washington, D.C.

Please be 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.

### Check Out the FOP's YouTube Channel and The Blue View Podcast!

The FOP's YouTube channel ([youtube.com/GLFOP](https://www.youtube.com/GLFOP)) hosts every episode of the FOP's podcast, entitled *The Blue View*, as well as news clips and interviews and our FOP Facts videos.

National President Patrick Yoes hosts *The Blue View*, which has featured guests from Capitol Hill and within the FOP, as well as law enforcement experts and leaders from around the country, to gain better insight into the issues and current events in the law enforcement community. The most recent episode features Representative Garret N. Graves (R-La.), who currently represents Louisiana's sixth congressional district. Representatives Graves and Abigail D. Spanberger (D-Va.) are united in an effort

to force a floor vote on H.R. 82, the Social Security Fairness Act.

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

### The Endorsement Stage of the 2024 Election

**The next election is less than a month away!**

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. Right now, we are vastly under-resourced and unable to support candidates in any significant way.

**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.

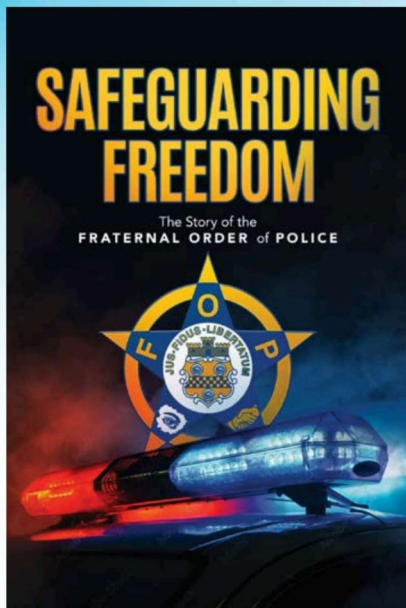
These contributions need not be for hundreds or thousands of dollars (though these are also very much appreciated) — but every dollar helps! If every FOP member gave just \$1, we could raise \$377,000! If 10% of our members gave just \$5 this year, we would raise \$188,500. We can and need to do better raising funds for our PAC!

To donate online, please visit

**[nfop-pac.firstresponderprocessing.com](https://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 our recurring monthly credit card donations, please contact the Steve Young Law Enforcement Legislative Advocacy Center at (202) 547-8189 or David Taboh at [dtaboh@fop.net](mailto:dtaboh@fop.net).

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



## 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.**



# Sixth Circuit Upholds Public Employee's First Amendment Speech Rights



During the 2020 protests led in part by the organization known as Black Lives Matter (BLM), Eric Noble, a security guard at the public library in Cincinnati, shared a meme on his personal Facebook page from home, outside of work hours. The meme, which did not contain racial epithets, stated “ALL LIVES SPLATTER, NOBODY CARES ABOUT YOUR PROTEST.” This phrase was a play on the “All Lives Matter” slogan used by some BLM opponents in response to the “Black Lives Matter” message. The meme also included a graphic of a vehicle running over protesters.

Noble removed the meme less than 24 hours after he posted it. Still, several library employees who were Facebook friends with Noble and worked with him saw the post and complained to the library. Noble was investigated and ultimately terminated. Noble filed a lawsuit against the library (*Noble v. Cincinnati & Hamilton County Public Library, et al.*), alleging that his termination was in retaliation for exercising his First Amendment right to free speech.

The trial court in the Southern District of Ohio granted summary judgment for the library. The trial court found that Noble's post caused disharmony with his co-workers, had a detrimental impact on his working relationships and risked harm to the library's reputation and trust among members of the community. However, on August 9, 2024, the Sixth Circuit reversed the trial court and ordered summary judgment in favor of Noble. The Sixth Circuit ruled that Noble's Facebook post was protected speech and that he could not be fired for it. This case is instructive on key aspects concerning public employees' rights to free speech.

When a public employee, such as a law enforcement officer, exercises their right to free speech, the courts face the delicate

## Just the Facts:

» When a public employee exercises their right to free speech, the courts face the delicate task of balancing individual freedoms with the interests of public service. In the recent case of *Noble v. Cincinnati & Hamilton County Public Library, et al.*, a library security guard who was fired in 2020 for sharing an anti-BLM meme on his personal Facebook page outside work hours filed a lawsuit alleging infringement of his First Amendment right. The Sixth Circuit ruled in his favor, holding that without evidence any member of the public beyond a few friends saw the meme, the library could not reasonably anticipate any public backlash and the employee's right to speak on a matter of public concern outweighed the employer's interest in promoting an effective and efficient workplace.

task of balancing individual freedoms with the interests of public service. Whether speech as a public employee is protected by the First Amendment depends on a well-established three-prong test. First, the employee must have spoken as a private citizen, not pursuant to their official duties. Second, the speech must address a matter of public concern. Third, the employee's interests in speaking on matters of public concern must outweigh the state's interest, “as an employer, in promoting the efficiency of the public services it performs through its employees” (*Pickering v. Bd. Of Educ. of Twp. High Sch. Dist.*, 391 U.S. 563, 568 [1968]).

In evaluating Noble's Facebook post, the Sixth Circuit noted that while Noble's speech was “highly distasteful,” the First Amendment safeguards “abhorrent speech, and it does so even if the speech makes others feel quite uncomfortable.” Noble was speaking on a matter of public concern — namely, whether the alleged violent and destructive tactics of BLM were appropriate means to protest the deaths of George Floyd and others. The court emphasized that his speech warrants significant First Amendment protection because the meme referenced

a high-profile public event and was made in a private setting. Additionally, there was no evidence that Noble discussed politics at work or that his views on the BLM protests or any other political matter ever interfered with his job performance. The court found that no member of the public complained of Noble's post to the library and noted that the post was up for less than one day, it had limited visibility due to his privacy setting and Noble had very few Facebook friends (less than 100). As such, the Sixth Circuit held that without evidence that any member of the public beyond a few Facebook friends saw the meme, the library could not reasonably anticipate any public backlash that would disrupt its operations caused by the meme.

Finally, it troubled the Sixth Circuit panel that the library and some of its employees engaged in the same debate as Noble, but from the opposite side. The library publicly supported the BLM movement, changing its Facebook profile to a solid black image and having the library's director publish a letter expressing the library's support for the BLM protests. The Sixth Circuit held that firing Noble for expressing a contrary



viewpoint to the powers that be at the institution suggests a biased motive and undercuts the library's argument that the meme disrupted workplace harmony.

To be sure, the right to free speech is not absolute. There are constraints that will depend on the content of the speech and the context in which it is made. But when the only injuries that resulted from the speech were the alleged hurt feelings of a few co-workers, a public employee's right to speak on a matter of public concern outweighs the employer's interest in promoting an effective and efficient workplace. **FOP**

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# How the FOP Made Wellness a Priority

Some 20 years ago, the law enforcement profession was in a much different place than it is today. Mental health was a topic rarely discussed, and police suicide was not systematically tracked. However, in the aftermath of 9/11, the National Fraternal Order of Police recognized that more should be done to support officers who had been involved in that tragedy and others. Thus, in 2001, the National Critical Incident Committee was formed. It was the task of the committee to support members who had been involved in and borne witness to tragedy and traumatic events.

Over the next decade, as conversations about law enforcement mental health and wellness increased, it became ever more clear that the stress being experienced by members of law enforcement was more complicated than experiences with trauma. "Wellness" became about more than fighting symptoms of post-traumatic stress, as rates of police suicide did not decline and still outpaced numbers of line-of-duty deaths. FOP leaders recognized that while it was important to acknowledge the impact of traumatic events, other factors related to well-being and health should also be considered. Thus, in 2013, the committee transitioned its mission and its name to become the National Officer Wellness Committee.

The period of time between 2013 and 2019 was one of significant advancement in the realm of officer wellness. Organizations began to track law enforcement suicide numbers, shedding additional light on the prevalence and nature of the issue. Finally, the rates of first responder suicide drew the attention of those outside of the first responder professions, including the mainstream media.

In late 2018, the National Officer Wellness Committee was approached by NBC News 4, the affiliate in New York City, with a proposal to conduct a national survey of members of law enforcement about police mental health and well-being. Journalists Evan Stuhlberger, David Ushery and David Manney, who were leading the project, had already done research and a previous feature highlighting the stress and

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***By providing access to vetted professional services, the FOP has simplified the process of making connections between wellness services and the officers who may need to access them.***

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mental health impacts experienced by members of the fire service. They wished to partner with the FOP in gathering responses to questions about the sources of police mental health, as well as the impacts of a career in policing. Over 8,000 police officers across the country completed the survey, representing an unprecedented response.

The NBC/FOP Survey of Police Officer Mental and Behavioral Health was groundbreaking and highlighted the

importance of this issue to members of law enforcement. The statistics gathered sent a strong message that police did not feel that enough was being done to support their mental health, and that stigma was high, preventing officers from seeking help.

The leadership of the National FOP recognized that our organization had a unique ability to help address the issue, and that action needed to be taken. Thus, in 2019, the National Officer Wellness Committee expanded its work and title to Division of Wellness Services, with committee member Sherri Martin being named the first full-time director. Drawing from her 23-year career in law enforcement and her formal education and experience in psychology and counseling, Director Martin worked with the committee to expand the ability of the FOP to provide wellness services and direction for law enforcement.

Drawing on the data and findings of the national survey, the Division of Wellness Services began to build programs and services that would address the sources of stigma that prevented officers from seeking help, make connections to culturally competent mental health services, and teach police officers and their families about mental health, well-being and how to support each other through a career in law enforcement.

As of 2024, the Division of Wellness Services, with the assistance of the National Officer Wellness Committee, has created and developed a robust system of services for all members of law enforcement and their families. All of the programs and services developed were built to address the needs and desires of law enforcement, as expressed in national surveys conducted by the FOP and beyond.

*Continued on page 40 >*



# There Is ALWAYS Another Option

FOP Vetted and Approved Crisis Hotlines



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

## WELLNESS PROVIDERS

### **Chateau Recovery**

Midway, UT

[chateaurecovery.com/programs/first-responders](https://chateaurecovery.com/programs/first-responders)

### **FHE Health: Shatterproof Program**

Deerfield Beach, FL

[fhrehab.com/services/first-responders](https://fhrehab.com/services/first-responders)

### **First Responder Wellness by Simple**

Recovery

Costa Mesa, CA

[firstresponder-wellness.com](https://firstresponder-wellness.com)

### **Harbor of Grace First Responder**

Program

Havre de Grace, MD

[harborofgracerecovery.com/first-responders](https://harborofgracerecovery.com/first-responders)

### **Transformations Treatment Center:**

**Help for Our Heroes Program**

Delray Beach, FL

[helpforourheroes.com](https://helpforourheroes.com)

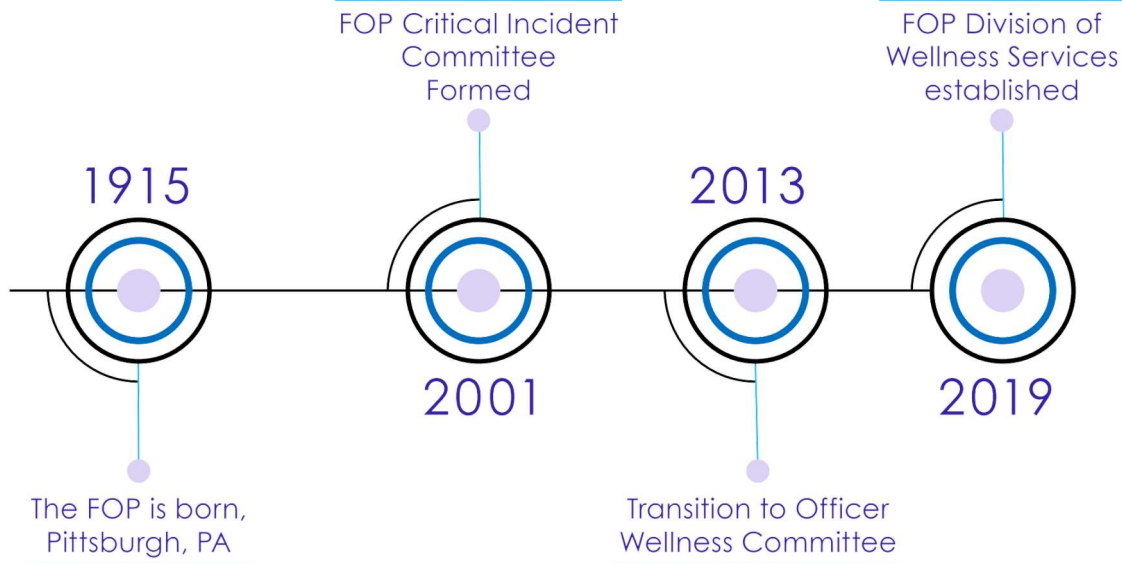
### **Warrior's Heart**

Bandera, TX

[warriorshheart.com](https://warriorshheart.com)

Find more vetted and approved wellness providers and programs at [fop.net/officer-wellness/providers](https://fop.net/officer-wellness/providers).

# Making Wellness a Priority



FOP National Officer Wellness Committee

## FOP HISTORY

*Continued from page 38 >*

The Power in Peers curriculum, developed in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Justice COPS Office, is a national standard course in law enforcement peer support. Power in Peers not only provides officers with instruction for supporting peer officers in the aftermath of critical incidents, but also teaches mentoring through other stressors faced in the daily lives of officers and their families.

The Blue Family Focus curriculum extends the reach of peer support to families of members of law enforcement. Research continues to show that officers' families are often their strongest and closest sources of support, a message that the FOP has always understood in its work with the National FOP Auxiliary. Both courses provide novel ways of thinking about officer wellness, drawing from the strengths of officers and their families to encourage support.

With the Approved Provider Bulletin program, the FOP Division of Wellness Services established a standard for wellness professionals and programs that

wish to serve law enforcement. With an effort that began around 2017, the National Officer Wellness Committee has established a standardized process for vetting individual mental health providers, residential treatment programs, wellness training programs and other products for suitability and qualification to serve police officers and their families. By providing access to vetted professional



services, the FOP has simplified the process of making connections between wellness services and the officers who may need to access them.

In an effort to continuously educate members about mental health and well-being, and to ensure that efforts to support officers never again wane, the FOP has

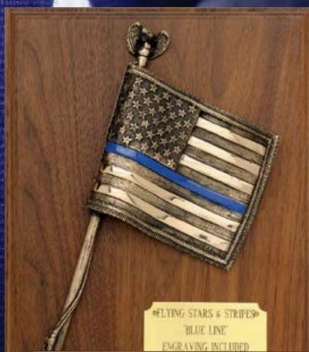
instituted annual training events singularly focused on officer wellness. The first FOP Wellness Summit was held in Nashville in 2020, and this event has expanded each year since its inception. Recognizing an opportunity to expand connections between officers and wellness services, the Wellness Professionals' Forum was added in 2021, annually providing training opportunities for wellness professionals wishing to improve their services to the law enforcement family.

It is by listening to the members of law enforcement about their needs to maintain and bolster their wellness that the FOP continues to drive efforts toward officer wellness in the profession. Recognizing the importance of continued research into the impacts of a law enforcement career as well as changes in officer well-being and suicide, the FOP Division of Wellness Services in 2021 partnered

with Griffith University to institute the Biennial Critical Issues in Policing Survey, an ongoing practice of measuring the perceptions and experiences of American law enforcement officers. Such national surveys allow the FOP to continuously speak for officers across the country, ensuring that officers have a voice. **FOP**



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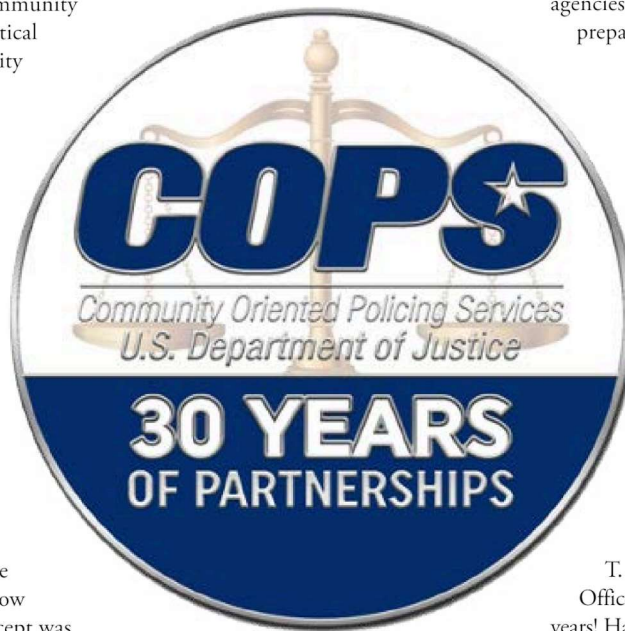
# Happy 30th Anniversary to the COPS Office!



One cannot go far within the law enforcement community without hearing a reference to “community policing.” I remember being skeptical during the early days of community policing. Some of us feared that this new concept could upset longstanding rules surrounding seniority. Others felt that the approach was too soft on crime. Many felt that valuable resources were being misdirected, resulting in an imbalance in workloads. Although skeptical, I was also inquisitive.

You see, the concepts of community policing were practices that many of my young co-workers had performed in the past (before it was acceptable behavior) and were chastised for it by superiors. So now that this new and innovative concept was becoming an acceptable norm, I needed to learn more, and I did. Because I was a union leader, I was able to meet with some of the scholars of the time and travel to agencies that were purportedly doing things right. I was able to see firsthand the services that were being provided by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) at the time. Anyone remember the Universal Hiring Program that brought so many additional officers into our profession?

As the only U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) component with policing in its name, the COPS Office has always placed an emphasis on listening to the field, people like you and me who interact with our real-life heroes every day. Because they listen to us, they conduct practical research on cutting-edge topics near and dear to us all. In 2018



they initiated the Collaborative Reform Initiative – Technical Assistance Center (CRI-TAC), which I have often referred to. CRI-TAC just completed servicing more than 1,000 agencies nationwide! In 2019, the COPS Office launched the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act (LEMHWA) program, which provides funding for training, peer mentoring and mental health program activities for law enforcement officers. This has been a great help to our own initiatives that Wellness Director Sherri Martin often refers to.

Most recently, the COPS Office led and authored the DOJ *Critical Incident Review: Active Shooter at Robb Elementary School* report, providing an accounting of the law enforcement response to the tragic May 2022 school shooting in

Uvalde, Texas, including observations, recommendations and resources to help agencies with their own planning and preparation.

And they have done so much more for all of us. They have influenced generations of law enforcement officers who police in our communities.

Constantly evolving and ever changing, the COPS Office keeps us all in tune with cutting-edge developments, helping us build trust and mutual respect with the communities we serve.

Thirty years ago, with the passage of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, the COPS Office was created. Today it's led by one of our own, Director Hugh T. Clements Jr. Let's hope the COPS Office continues its efforts for the next 30 years! Happy 30th anniversary to the COPS Office! Visit their site often ([cops.usdoj.gov](https://cops.usdoj.gov)). They have much to offer all of us.

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 [ktturney@fop.org](mailto:ktturney@fop.org), or (815) 482-5620. For more information on CRI-TAC, visit [cops.usdoj.gov/cri-tac](https://cops.usdoj.gov/cri-tac).





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# What an Upset!

The 2024 college and professional football seasons are well underway, and there have already been a number of shocking outcomes. Most notable, perhaps, was last month's victory of tiny Northern Illinois University over powerhouse Notre Dame. It was the type of outcome that even those who do not follow football or sports in general can appreciate as a shocking result. The underdog upsets the "Goliath." This of course spurs days, if not weeks, of endless analysis and opinions, not to mention blame and finger-pointing.

The term "upset" in this context comes from a horse race in 1919, when heavily favored and undefeated thoroughbred Man o' War lost a race to a horse he had beaten in six previous races. That horse's name? "Upset."

There are many reasons why a more talented, skilled and experienced person, team or even horse loses to a far inferior adversary. The most notable is the lack of commitment. The lack of commitment drives the lack of preparation. Some might also say it is falling victim to one's success. Knowing that you have the best position, the best skill, the most experience, or just knowing the common sense and reasonableness of your position can lead to complacency and even arrogance.

In the labor arena, this complacency can be fatal to contract negotiations, grievances and arbitration. Complacency and arrogance can lead to ineffective or insufficient preparation. Two complacency and arrogance-based phrases that often lead to a loss in labor (and any other endeavor) are "I already know" and "I've got this." Both of these assumptions shift one's focus from doing everything it takes to win to what one will do after the presumed win. Overlooking an inferior opponent or,

## Just the Facts:

**>> In sports and in the labor arena, even the most talented, skilled and experienced side can lose to a far inferior adversary if they lack commitment and preparation. Complacency and arrogance can be fatal to success by causing you to overlook details that may make all the difference in contract negotiations, grievances and arbitration. The best position from which to negotiate is a position of knowledge, so getting all the information and being fluent in it can help prevent upsets.**

in sports, looking past them to the next game often results in a loss.

Overlooking details, no matter how obvious, in the labor arena can be the difference between a solid contract with great economic benefits and something simply average. In arbitration, it can mean winning the argument that improves the contract benefits, and it can make the difference between a grievant going back to work and a grievant going home without a job.

Regardless of how "right" one's position is or how solid and reasonable a contract proposal may seem, there is no excuse for being completely prepared for anything and everything that may come up. The best position from which to negotiate is a position of knowledge. There is simply no reason why any labor negotiator would ever enter a room, whether for contract negotiations or a grievance meeting, without being the most knowledgeable person in it on the relevant subjects. This is especially so in law enforcement negotiations, because the adversary is a public entity.

Every single government entity, from small towns to the federal government, is required to provide records of its official business to any member of the public upon request as a matter of law. In labor relations, there are also statutes that make providing those records

to unions mandatory before meeting with the employer, under the pain of sanctions by labor boards and the courts. Not getting the information and being fluent in it is inexcusable. While doing so does not necessarily guarantee a win, it will definitely either strengthen your argument or let you know when it may be wiser to pursue a different strategy. It certainly will go a long way toward preventing the upset.

At the Labor Services Division, we pride ourselves on providing the highest level of service to achieve the greatest results for our members. Please do not hesitate to contact us to learn how we can serve you today. Stay safe and well. **FOP**



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