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WINNER OF A SUMMIT
CREATIVE AWARD





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When “Routine” Turns Deadly: Why Congress Must Pass the Protect and Serve Act Now



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

In our profession, the phrase “routine call” has become a misnomer. Too often, what begins as service to a victim or a follow-up on a complaint can, in an instant, turn into a fight for life. That reality was laid bare again in York County, Pennsylvania, where three officers — Detective Sergeant Cody Becker, Detective Mark Baker and Detective Isaiah Emenheiser — were murdered and two others wounded during an attempted arrest of a stalking suspect. Multiple outlets reported that the assailant ambushed responding officers with a rifle, leaving a community shattered and a department in mourning.

Days later, another stark reminder: In Evansville, Indiana, Officer Sam Taylor was shot and critically injured while confronting an armed suspect linked to a stolen vehicle and an attempted carjacking. Evansville Chief Phil Smith has told the public that Officer Taylor may lose the use of his lower extremities, an incomprehensible price for answering the call to protect others.

These incidents are not aberrations. Our FOP data continues to show an alarming pattern of officers being shot in the line of duty, including in ambush-style attacks. In our recent monthly updates, we reported dozens of ambushes resulting in scores of officers shot and far too many

killed, numbers that confirm what every cop on the street already knows: The threat environment has intensified.

I’ve emphasized this in conference presentations and reports throughout the year: The escalation of targeted violence against law enforcement is not merely a statistic; it is a national public safety emergency. It deprives communities of experienced officers, demoralizes the rank and file, and places added strain on agencies that are already struggling to recruit, train and retain. Our members feel it on the midnight shift, at daylight roll call and in

Continued on page 8 >

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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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Continued from page 6 >

every quiet moment when they replay the last dangerous call in their minds.

The York County murders and the shooting of Officer Taylor are a painful through-line that runs across cities and small towns alike: offenders emboldened enough to ambush, fire on officers without warning and weaponize surprise as a tactic. Policymakers should understand that this is not a “big city” problem or a “regional” issue; it is a national crisis requiring national action.

That is why the FOP is renewing our urgent call for Congress to pass the Protect and Serve Act. This bipartisan legislation would create a distinct federal offense for those who deliberately target law enforcement officers with violence, recognizing, at the highest level of our legal system, that an attack on an officer is an attack on the rule of law and the safety of the community those officers protect. The measure has been reintroduced in the 119th Congress, and our organization has published a detailed analysis underscoring why this targeted tool is needed in today's environment.

Let me be clear about what the Protect and Serve Act is and is not. It is not a substitute for strong state prosecutions or for local accountability.

It is a complementary, narrowly tailored federal backstop aimed squarely at the most serious, intentional attacks on law enforcement. It signals that when offenders choose to ambush or otherwise target cops for violence, there will be swift and certain consequences, and a federal nexus to ensure those consequences are real.

**We will continue to
stand the line, honor
our fallen, support our
wounded and demand
the policies that keep
our neighborhoods safe.**

As I've shared in prior briefings, our broader agenda also includes better officer wellness resources, training and technology, because prevention and survivability matter. We support tools that give our officers time, distance and information; we advocate for interoperable communications, robust community partnerships and evidence-based strategies that reduce violent

encounters. But even as we advance those priorities, we must confront a hard truth: deterrence and accountability are essential parts of public safety, and the current patchwork of responses to targeted attacks on law enforcement is not enough.

To our elected leaders: This is not theoretical. In York County, three families will never be the same, and two more are praying through hospital nights. In Evansville, an officer who ran toward danger is now fighting to recover from devastating injuries. These are not headlines for a day; they are consequences for a lifetime. Pass the Protect and Serve Act. Give prosecutors the federal tool they need to hold those who target our officers fully accountable.

To our members and to the communities we serve: We remain steadfast. We will continue to stand the line, honor our fallen, support our wounded and demand the policies that keep our neighborhoods safe. I am proud of the courage I see in our ranks every day, and I am equally determined to ensure that courage is matched by laws worthy of the risks our officers take.

Congress has the opportunity now to make it unmistakably clear: If you target a law enforcement officer for violence, you will be held to account. The Protect and Serve Act should be the law of the land. Let's get it done. **FOP**

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FOP.net/officer-wellness/crisis-hotlines



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Investing in the Future

// **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 month's edition of the *Journal* finds you well. My staff and I have been extremely busy since our National Biennial Conference in Miami Beach. Our focus has been on the new membership database system, Association Anywhere. We went live with the new system and decoupled from Velarium on September 1.

The new system has been designed to make membership management easier and more streamlined. It is totally different from our old VUE system. We understand the frustration many lodge administrators have relayed to us over the usage of the new system. We are working through the issues as they arise. Understand that it is a new system designed to operate differently. There is a learning curve, and we are working on training platforms to aid users in navigating the system. Please be patient with us as we work through perfecting the new system.

Understand, the membership database serves two primary functions. Obviously, keeping track of our 384,000 members, the State and local lodge they belong to, and their contact information. The second function is billing for annual per capita. Many lodges used the old VUE system to track other information, such as labor or legal services. We recognize these are important functions, but the system currently is not set up to track these needs. As I have previously reported, this is the first phase of a multiphase build. We are evaluating the individual requests from the various State and local lodges; however, we must factor in the costs for specific requests and how they will benefit the majority of lodges. If a State or local lodge needs a specific function, we have an IT professional who can give advice and projected costs. Please contact me if you need assistance.

I must give a special recognition to our IT team: Mark Hong, Steve Kim,

Matthew Phillips and Gavin Boler. These men have worked tirelessly on developing the new system. They have worked 12-to-16-hour days, including weekends and holidays, for the past three months. Their total focus has been on the new system, and their dedication to the National FOP has not gone unnoticed. Please join me in giving them a big thank-you.

In closing, I want to thank you for being patient with us as we transition into several new systems. It will be many months before everything settles down, but, in the end, we will have a state-of-the-art, user-friendly, highly functional system. These improvements are long overdue. We have not kept up with emerging technology, but we are on track now to catch up and expand in the coming years.

Be safe, and it is my privilege and honor to serve as your National secretary. Please let me or my staff know how we can assist you. We stand ready to help. **FOP**

UPCOMING EVENTS



BARGAINING FOR SUCCESS

NOVEMBER 4-6, 2025

South Point Hotel & Casino
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Information & Registration: national.fop.net/2025bargainingforsuccess

PATHWAYS TO EXCELLENCE

MARCH 29-APRIL 3, 2026

South Point Hotel & Casino
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Registration opening soon!

SHARE YOUR STORY!

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

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





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YOUR WELLNESS STARTS WITH HEALTH LITERACY



This October, the American Heart Association joins the National Fraternal Order of Police in recognizing Health Literacy Month — because protecting your health and wellness is just as important as protecting your community.

What Is Health Literacy?

It's your ability to find, understand and use health information to make decisions that keep you ready for duty and strong for your family.

Why it matters: A clear understanding of your health helps prevent illness, manage conditions more effectively and build confidence when responding to emergencies — whether on patrol, in the precinct or at home. Empowering yourself with resources like the new **Do It Yourself Health: Blood Pressure** lesson can make a real difference. Visit tinyurl.com/y7szyhjw to check it out.

Tips to Improve Your Health Literacy

- Start simple to lower your risks: Make an appointment to talk with your health care provider.
- Take a list of questions to ask your health care provider to your appointments — start with these:
 - o What changes can I make to take better care of my health?
 - o What can I do before my next appointment?
 - o How will I know if the changes I've made are making a difference?
 - o What resources can help me learn more?
- Stay current with checkups and preventive screenings.
- Remember the American Heart Association's Life's Essential 8: Eight simple things you can do to improve heart health, like eating better, being more active, getting enough sleep and managing blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar. For more information, go to tinyurl.com/5dhp5rkx.
- Share health knowledge with your family, fellow officers and community. **FOP**



Take charge of your health today! Scan the QR code to explore more tools that can help you track your health, set goals and stay strong — for the job and beyond.

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



(800) AHA-USA-1 | heart.org

SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE

Inpatient and Intensive Outpatient Treatment for First Responders

First Responder Wellness is an employee retention tool exclusively for public safety professionals to treat post-traumatic stress, alcohol, addiction, anxiety, depression. Review our offerings below and reach out for more information on how we return employees to work faster and healthier.



WHAT WE TREAT

Post-Traumatic Stress
Addiction
Alcohol
Anxiety
Depression

An alcohol or substance abuse problem is NOT required to enter our program.

OUR PROGRAMS FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

Detox
Residential
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Online Intensive Outpatient
After Care
Family Program

WHY AGENCIES NATIONWIDE TRUST FIRST RESPONDER WELLNESS

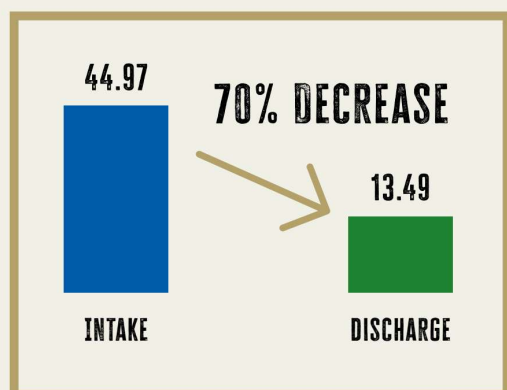
- 94% return to work rate
- We hold the title of a vetted and approved treatment program by the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP).
- We work with partners at more than 500 agencies across the country.
- We have provided treatment to over 1,800 public safety professionals since 2018.
- Our culturally competent staff works exclusively with first responders.
- Program curriculum is developed specially for public safety.
- Most insurance plans and workers' comp are accepted.

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

Marco Monteblando,
Executive Director
Washington State FOP

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

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



Updated 4-1-2025.

VALIDATED OUTCOMES

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

- A score of 38 or higher is enough for a provisional diagnosis of PTSD.
- Total score of 31 or higher suggests the client may benefit from PTSD treatment.
- A 5-10 point decrease represents a reliable change (i.e. change not due to chance).
- First Responder Wellness clients see an average PCL-5 reduction of over 31 points, which is significant.



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University of San Diego



Elevating Law Enforcement Leadership: The University of San Diego's Online MS-LEPSL Program

The need for exceptional leadership in law enforcement has never been more urgent.

For law enforcement professionals seeking to advance their careers and enhance their impact, the University of San Diego's **Master of Science in Law Enforcement & Public Safety Leadership (MS-LEPSL)** offers a unique and highly respected pathway. Tailored specifically for the working public safety professional, this 100% online program provides a comprehensive curriculum that goes beyond traditional criminal justice degrees to focus on the essential leadership skills required in today's policing landscape.

A Decade of Distinction and Service

This year marks a significant milestone for the MS-LEPSL program

as it celebrates its **10th anniversary**. Throughout this decade of commitment to professional law enforcement leadership development and education, 1,080 professionals from across the U.S. and Canada have earned the prestigious LEPSL degree, which has been recognized as one of the best online master's in criminal justice programs by *U.S. News & World Report* for seven consecutive years. It is widely considered the gold standard for police leaders.

A Curriculum for Modern Policing

Unlike many programs that cover broad academic topics, the MS-LEPSL curriculum is designed to be immediately applicable to current, real-world scenarios and the challenges departments face every day. Students engage with subjects vital to effective leadership, including **constitutional law, ethical decision-making, budgeting, technology, communication and conflict resolution**. This practical

approach is a hallmark of the program. Graduate Adrian Wadsworth from Pocatello, Idaho, like many LEPSL graduates, credits the program for reigniting his passion to serve and lead. "I was at a burnout phase in my career when I began the LEPSL program. Through the journey, I began to rediscover why I chose this career and it shifted my focus," he said. "I was not really seeking promotions before but soon saw opportunities to serve." After completing the program, he was promoted to sergeant and then lieutenant, and also served as president for the Portneuf Valley FOP.

Developed and Taught by Law Enforcement, for Law Enforcement

A key component of the program's success is its faculty. Composed of seasoned public safety and military leaders, the instructors bring a wealth of law enforcement and leadership

experience to the virtual classroom. Undersheriff James Mullen from Ulster County, New York, noted that “the faculty is knowledgeable and supportive, and the curriculum is both challenging and relevant to real-world law enforcement leadership.” He added that LEPSL “significantly contributed to my professional growth.” This direct connection between the curriculum, the faculty and the profession ensures that the lessons taught are not merely academic but are grounded in the practical realities of law enforcement.

The collaborative environment of the program is another key benefit. Commander Erwin Manansala from the San Diego Police Department appreciated having classmates from across the country, which he said gave him valuable perspectives on a wide range of topics from different law enforcement agencies. “That perspective is invaluable as a police leader,” he said, adding that he would recommend the LEPSL program to anyone working in law enforcement or public safety, regardless of rank or role.

Empowering Career Advancement

For many, the MS-LEPSL program is a catalyst for career advancement. The program’s emphasis on developing critical management and leadership skills provides graduates with a competitive edge. When alumna Julie Rodriguez was promoted to captain with the Los Angeles Police Department, she said, “I truly believe the LEPSL program greatly assisted in this achievement.” The online format, which allows students to balance their studies with their demanding work schedule and family commitments, also provides a powerful and expansive professional network.

In a rapidly changing world, effective leadership in law enforcement is paramount. The University of San Diego’s Master of Science in Law Enforcement & Public Safety Leadership program offers a flexible, relevant and highly regarded educational experience that prepares students to meet the challenges facing their communities and departments with confidence, creativity and honor. And as a member of the National FOP University Consortium, the University of San Diego is proud to offer a tuition discount to all students who are FOP members. **FOP**

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

FOP.net/fop-university.



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EDUCATION & EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT

MARCH 29–APRIL 3, 2026

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Exclusive Deal for Attendees!

We are pleased to offer a special room rate of **\$104 per night** (includes all fees) for event attendees. This rate is available Sunday, March 29, through Thursday, April 2.

Registration will open in the coming months, and you won't want to miss it!

Slots are expected to fill quickly once it goes live. If you'd like to be among the first notified of open registration, send an email request to FOPEducation@NationalFOP.org and we will put you on our priority list.

Wellness Professionals' Forum – \$200

(March 29)

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

Officer Wellness Summit – \$450

(March 30–31)

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

Labor Leadership Summit – \$525

(March 30–31)

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

Legal Counselors Seminar – \$675

(March 30–31)

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

Excellency in Chaplaincy – \$300

(March 31–April 1)

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

Leadership Matters – \$500

(April 1–3)

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

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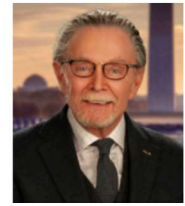


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Must have been actively commissioned within the last two years or meet the requirements to attend Basic Law Enforcement Equivalency Academy (BLEEA) in Washington State.



Congress Returns to D.C.: Continuing Resolution Fails, Government Shutdown Likely



The House considered and passed H.R. 5371, the Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2026, on a 217–212 vote. This is a stopgap measure that would have funded the government through November 21 at the enacted fiscal year 2025 funding levels. The bill would have also appropriated an additional \$88 million for enhanced security of lawmakers, administration officials and Supreme Court justices. Importantly, it also would have allowed the District of Columbia to spend local funds for programs and activities at the rates proposed by D.C. in its fiscal 2026 budget.

The House transmitted the bill to the Senate, which rejected the measure on a 44–48 vote. There does not seem to be any clear path forward at this point, with House leaders instructing members not to return until after September 30, when existing appropriations will be exhausted. Barring some breakthrough, the federal government may partially shut down on October 1.

Crime Emergency in D.C.: House Actions

In August, President Trump issued an executive order (EO) entitled “Declaring a Crime Emergency in the District of Columbia” (see tinyurl.com/2tsuyxse). Citing the city’s violent crime, murder and robbery rates, the EO invoked section 740 of the Home Rule Act. Officers from a variety of federal agencies, along with the D.C. National Guard and National Guard units from other states, were deployed over the course of 30 days as provided for in the Home Rule Act.

Mayor Muriel E. Bowser, who testified before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, acknowledged that the federal intervention helped accelerate D.C. efforts to reduce crime in the city. She also

Just the Facts:

» A partial federal government shutdown looms after the Senate rejected a House-passed stopgap measure in mid-September that would have funded departments and agencies through November 21. Meanwhile, the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform advanced several bills addressing crime in D.C. in August, three of which — H.R. 4922, H.R. 5140 and H.R. 5143 — have since passed the House. The chamber also approved the National Defense Authorization Act, while the Senate continues work on its own version. We are urging that the Senate bill include the bipartisan Law Enforcement and Crime Victims Support Package. In addition, we are advocating for funding for the Urban Area Security Initiative program, along with our other priorities.

issued an EO requiring local authorities to coordinate indefinitely with federal law enforcement “to the maximum extent allowable by law.” It also established the Safe and Beautiful Emergency Operations Center to serve as the hub for managing the city’s response and coordinating with federal partners, including the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and U.S. Park Police (USPP).

The House committee then considered and passed the following bills supported by the FOP:

- **H.R. 4922**, the D.C. Criminal Reforms to Immediately Make Everyone Safer (DC CRIMES) Act, which would redefine the youthful offender age from 24 to 18 to ensure that young adults who commit serious crimes are held accountable as adults, aligning D.C. policies more closely with those in other jurisdictions and promoting greater deterrence against violent offenses
- **H.R. 5107**, the Common-Sense Law Enforcement and Accountability Now in D.C. (CLEAN DC) Act, which would repeal the entirety of D.C.’s Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022. This legislation goes beyond just the restoration of the collective bargaining provisions and would also eliminate restrictive measures that have hampered the ability of the officers serving the Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) from doing their jobs and allow them to perform their duties more effectively while maintaining essential protections. This measure is of particular importance to the FOP’s D.C. police union, which represents the officers of the MPD.
- **H.R. 5140**, which would lower the age at which a minor can be charged as an adult from 16 to 14 for certain serious crimes. This adjustment recognizes the severity of offenses committed by younger individuals in some cases and provides prosecutors with the necessary tools to address rising juvenile violence.
- **H.R. 5143**, the District of Columbia Policing Protection Act,

Continued on page 20 >

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WASHINGTON REPORT

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which would grant officers and their supervisors greater discretion when deciding whether or not to engage in vehicular pursuits. This flexibility is essential for apprehending dangerous suspects safely and efficiently, reducing the risks posed by fleeing criminals to the public.

- **H.R. 5172**, the Strong Sentences for Safer D.C. Streets Act, which would increase the mandatory minimum sentences for serious crimes committed in D.C. Stronger penalties will serve as a powerful deterrent, ensuring that repeat offenders and those committing violent acts face appropriate consequences to protect our communities.
- **H.R. 5214**, the District of Columbia Cash Bail Reform Act, which requires pre- and post-conviction detention for crimes of violence and dangerous offenders, and mandates cash bail for certain

offenses. These reforms will help prevent dangerous individuals from being released back into the community prematurely, thereby enhancing public safety and reducing recidivism.

The House then passed H.R. 4922 on a 240–179 vote, H.R. 5140 on a 225–203 vote and H.R. 5143 on a 245–182 vote. All three of these bills were then sent to the Senate for further consideration.

The FOP has been in close contact with the administration and our allies in the House and Senate on these issues in addition to all of the participating departments, including the MPD, Metro Transit Police Department, U.S. Capitol Police and USPP, all of which are represented by the FOP.

National Defense Authorization Act

The House considered and passed H.R. 3838, the Streamlining Procurement for Effective Execution and Delivery (SPEED) and National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2026, on a 231–196 vote. The bill has a provision that restores collective

bargaining rights for civilian employees working for the U.S Department of Defense (DOD) and was transmitted to the Senate for further action.

The Senate continues its consideration of its own reauthorization bill, S. 2296, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2026.

The FOP is urging both committees to include S. Amdt. 3272, the Law Enforcement and Crime Victims Support Package, as part of S. 2296 before it goes to the floor for consideration.

The amendment, which the FOP strongly supports, was offered by Senators Charles E. Grassley (R-Iowa) and Richard J. Durbin (D-Ill.), chairman and ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary, respectively. The amendment includes the following bills — all of which were unanimously approved by the Judiciary Committee:

- **The Protecting First Responders From Secondary Exposure Act**, which would allow state and

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WELLNESS PROVIDERS

Chateau Recovery Midway, UT

chateaufirstrecovery.com/first-responders

FHE Health:

Shatterproof Program Deerfield Beach, FL

fherehab.com/services/first-responders

First Responder Wellness by Simple Recovery Costa Mesa, CA

firstresponder-wellness.com

Harbor of Grace First Responder Program

Havre de Grace, MD

harborofgracerecovery.com/first-responders

Throttle and Thrive Palos Verdes Estates, CA

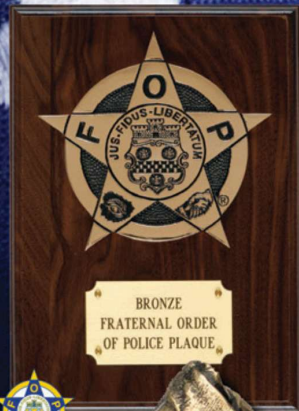
throttleandthrive.com

Warrior's Heart Bandera, TX

warriorsheart.com

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

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Top Priorities in Brief



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

House: 36 co-sponsors (10 R, 26 D)

Senate: Not yet introduced

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

House: 44 co-sponsors (6 R, 38 D)

Senate: 1 co-sponsor (1 D)

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

House: Passed

Senate: 8 co-sponsors (8 R)

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

House: 91 co-sponsors (70 R, 21 D)

Senate: 18 co-sponsors (18 R)

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

House: 93 co-sponsors (33 R, 60 D)

Senate: 20 co-sponsors (6 R, 14 D)

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



WASHINGTON REPORT

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local governments to purchase containment devices through the existing Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program (COSSAP)

- The **PROTECT Our Children Reauthorization Act**, which would update and reauthorize the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force Program that helps state and local law enforcement agencies combat online child exploitation and abuse
- The **Strong Communities Act**, which would establish a grant program for local law enforcement agencies to assist in recruiting officers from their own community
- The **Reauthorizing Support and Treatment for Officers in Crisis (STOIC) Act**, which would reauthorize programs for law enforcement family support services, suicide prevention programs and mental health services for law enforcement officers
- The **Chief Herbert D. Proffitt Act**, which would amend the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) program to include retired public safety officers who are injured or killed in a targeted attack
- The **Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act**, which would categorize duty-related cancer fatalities as a line-of-duty death under the PSOB program
- The **Retired Law Enforcement Officers Continuing Service Act**, which would establish a grant program to support state and local agencies in leveraging the expertise of retired officers for tasks such as assisting with investigations, forensic analysis and reviewing camera footage
- The **Improving Police Critical Aid for Responding to Emergencies (CARE) Act**, which would expand the existing U.S. Department of Justice's Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne-JAG) program to allow for the purchase of trauma kits

It should be noted that S. 911, the **Chief Herbert D. Proffitt Act**, and S. 1595, the **Improving Police Critical Aid for Responding to Emergencies**

(**CARE) Act**, also passed the Senate by unanimous consent and are awaiting House action.

The FOP will be pushing for the inclusion of this bipartisan package, as well as pushing for the implementation of the Department of Defense Law Enforcement Credential Act, which requires all civilian law enforcement officers employed by the DOD and its component agencies to be issued an appropriate law enforcement credential.

House Committee Holds Hearing on Public Safety Communications

The House Committee on Energy and Commerce's Subcommittee on Communications and Technology held a hearing on public safety communications to review the need to reauthorize the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet), issues related to Next-Generation 911 and interoperability. National President Yoes submitted written testimony for the record, which you can read at tinyurl.com/39fy24vv.

Protecting UASI

The FOP fully engaged with White House officials, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on the value of the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) program. The UASI is an important public safety and anti-terrorism program under the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) administered by FEMA within the DHS.

The UASI program is designed to provide federal resources and support to high-threat, high-density urban areas across the U.S. Law enforcement agencies operating in high-risk urban environments provide essential resources to prevent, mitigate and respond to terrorist threats. From the perspective of rank-and-file officers — who face these dangers daily — UASI is a welcome and much-needed program that provides funding necessary to equip us with the tools, communications equipment, training and coordination necessary to protect our communities and ourselves. This program not only enhances homeland security by building resilient capabilities but also directly supports law enforcement officers by funding protective gear, specialized training and collaborative exercises that save lives.

The president's FY 2026 budget request proposes a reduction of \$138

million for the program. However, the House Committee on Appropriations favorably reported H.R. 4213, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2026, in June, which increases funding for UASI to \$615 million. We were pleased that the full appropriation for UASI, \$553.5 million, was made available for the current fiscal year, despite reports that UASI would be “zeroed out” for 2025.

Our current concern, however, is the potential recommendations of the FEMA Review Council to significantly cut or eliminate the UASI program. While EO 14180 did not directly mandate specific dollar-amount cuts to UASI or other programs, it initiated a full-scale review process that led to subsequent holds, pauses and proposed reductions in FEMA grants. If the Review Council recommends “zeroing out” or cutting funding for UASI, it would have a deleterious impact on homeland security and public safety in every UASI region throughout the country.

We are working to ensure that the FY 2026 allocation for UASI meets or exceeds the FY 2025 appropriation. Without UASI, law enforcement officers would face increased risks, and homeland security would suffer from fragmented defenses in our most vulnerable cities.

Legislative Update: The LEOSA Reform Act and the Protect and Serve Act

Staff in the Washington, D.C., legislative office have been focused on meeting with every member of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary in an effort to schedule markups on these two FOP priorities. At this point, we do not have any commitments as to when the bills might be considered.

Other Legislative Activity

In addition to the House bills listed above, the FOP has supported the following legislation from last month:

- **H.R. 3327** (Bacon, R-Neb.), the Public Safety Retirees Healthcare Protection Act, which would increase the pre-tax benefit amount from the Healthcare Enhancement for Local Public Safety (HELPS) Retirees Act from \$3,000 to \$6,000 per year
- **H.R. 5282** (Reschenthaler, R-N.Y.), the Reauthorizing

Supporting and Treating Officers in Crisis (STOIC) Act, which would reauthorize funds made available from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) to continue services for law enforcement officers and their families to include stress reduction and suicide prevention through 2029

- **H.R. 5403** (Landsman, D-Ohio), the Enhancing COPS Hiring Program Grants for Local Law Enforcement Act, which would allow funds administered by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) to be used to provide bonuses for the recruitment and retention of law enforcement officers

Sign Up for the FOP's Weekly Update

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

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

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

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

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

NFOP PAC Update

Believe it or not, we have almost hit the halfway point between the 2024 election and the 2026 midterms. Notwithstanding the funds we raised at Conference, the PAC is still well short of the funds it needs to make an impact in next year's elections.

We need more of our members to contribute to ensure that our PAC has the resources to support candidates who will fight for our officers and the issues that are important to them. With the next election cycle just over



a year away, we still have time to replenish our PAC funds.

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

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

These contributions need not be for large amounts (though these are also very much appreciated) — but every dollar helps! If every FOP member gave just \$1, we could raise \$382,000! If 10% of our members gave just \$5 this year, we would raise more than \$190,000.

To donate online, please go to nfop-pac.firstresponderprocessing.com. If you would like to donate via check, please make it out to the National Fraternal Order of Police Political Action Committee and mail it to 328 Massachusetts Ave. NE, Washington, D.C., 20002. For inquiries about our effortless payroll deduction program or to sign up for recurring monthly donations, please contact the Steve Young Law Enforcement Legislative Advocacy Center at (202) 547-8189 or David Taboh at dtaboh@fop.net.

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



Upholding the “Totality of the Circumstances”



Why the Supreme Court Should Grant Review in *District of Columbia v. R.W.*

In February 2023, a 15-year-old identified as R.W. was stopped by a Metropolitan Police Department officer in Washington, D.C., after a late-night call about a suspicious vehicle. The stop led to the discovery of a stolen car, but the D.C. Court of Appeals ultimately vacated R.W.’s convictions, holding that the officer lacked reasonable suspicion to perform a stop under the Fourth Amendment. The District of Columbia has since filed a petition for certiorari with the U.S. Supreme Court, asking the court to restore the commonsense principle that officers may rely on the **totality of the circumstances** when deciding whether reasonable suspicion justifies a stop.

The National FOP, which advocates for its membership and their constitutional authority to protect public safety, intends to file an amicus brief in support of the petition. This case is not just about a single juvenile offender in D.C. It is about whether courts will continue to apply the holistic, officer-centered analysis that the Supreme Court has long endorsed, or whether they will adopt a rigid “divide-and-exclude” approach that strips police of the ability to act in fluid, dangerous situations.

At 2 a.m., Officer Vanterpool responded to a radio dispatch about a suspicious vehicle at an apartment complex. Upon arrival, he observed two people flee from the back seat of a parked car. Almost simultaneously, the driver — later identified as R.W. — began backing the vehicle out of its space, rear door still ajar.

Confronted with this suspicious scene, Officer Vanterpool blocked the vehicle, drew his firearm and ordered R.W. to raise his hands. Officers soon discovered

Just the Facts:

» The District of Columbia has asked the Supreme Court to review a 2023 case involving a D.C. police officer who stopped a 15-year-old after responding to a late-night call about a suspicious car. The stop led to the discovery of a stolen vehicle, but the D.C. Court of Appeals later vacated the suspect’s convictions, holding that the officer lacked reasonable suspicion to perform a stop under the Fourth Amendment. In its petition, the District argues that officers should be allowed to consider the totality of the circumstances when determining whether reasonable suspicion justifies a stop. The Supreme Court’s decision could clarify how courts evaluate stops and the standard officers must meet in similar situations.

that the ignition had been “punched,” a common sign of auto theft, and that the vehicle had indeed been reported stolen. R.W. was charged with unauthorized use

Law enforcement officers deserve clear, uniform rules that respect their training, experience and duty to act in uncertain circumstances.

of a motor vehicle, felony receipt of stolen property, unlawful entry and operating without a permit.

The trial court denied a suppression motion, holding that the officer had reasonable suspicion. But the D.C. Court of Appeals reversed, concluding that several of the facts could not legally contribute to the reasonable suspicion calculus.

The appellate court made two critical legal errors. First, the court ruled that the radio call reporting a “suspicious vehicle” was irrelevant because it did not specify the source or reliability of the information. Under this reasoning, even an officer responding to a call would be prohibited from factoring the call itself into their analysis unless the caller’s reliability were established in court. Second, the court further held that the two passengers’ flight could not be attributed to the driver. According to the decision, “guilt by association” is impermissible absent proof of a “suspicious joint venture.” This rigid rule discounted the reality that companions’ flight is often a powerful indicator of shared criminal activity.

With those facts excluded, the court was left with only the late hour and minimal car movement, which it deemed insufficient to justify the stop.

The District filed a petition for review with the U.S. Supreme Court. The petition argues that the D.C. Court of Appeals adopted a “divide-and-conquer” approach at odds with Supreme Court precedent. In *United States v. Arvizu* (2002), the court rejected the practice of isolating and dismissing individual factors that

may appear innocent in isolation but gain weight when considered collectively. Instead, *Arvizu* reaffirmed that the proper analysis is to evaluate the **whole picture**. The District emphasizes several key points.

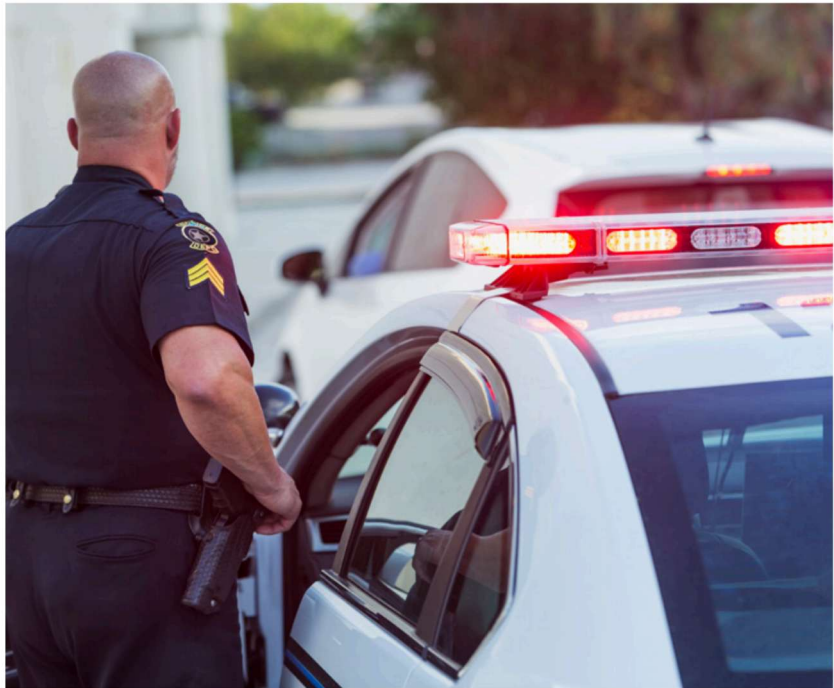
For example, federal courts are divided. The majority of circuits allow consideration of all facts known to the officer, while a minority — including the D.C. Court of Appeals and four federal circuits — exclude certain facts deemed too vague, innocent or general. This split leaves officers facing different rules depending on jurisdiction. Moreover, in D.C., the federal district court and the D.C. Court of Appeals apply different standards. This creates a bizarre scenario in which the legality of an officer's actions may depend on which prosecutor's office — federal or local — handles the case.

Finally, "divide-and-conquer" approach hampers officers' ability to act decisively in volatile situations, potentially making them hesitant to intervene until it is too late. The petition urges the Supreme Court either to grant full review or to summarily reverse the decision.

The D.C. Court's reasoning is not confined to one jurisdiction. Courts in the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and 10th Circuits, and three state supreme courts (Wyoming, Massachusetts and Indiana) have adopted similar exclusionary approaches. Left unchecked, this trend threatens to create a patchwork of standards across the country. Officers working multijurisdictional cases — or simply traveling across state lines — would be subject to different constitutional interpretations of the same conduct.

The scenario in this case reflects the very dangers officers face nightly: late-hour calls, fleeing suspects and vehicles attempting to escape. The D.C. Court's approach effectively tells officers they must ignore several of these red flags and instead pretend the situation is benign until more overt criminal evidence emerges. This is unrealistic and unsafe. Courts should not place officers in a position where hesitation increases risk to themselves and the public.

Terry v. Ohio established that officers may conduct brief stops based on reasonable suspicion — a flexible, commonsense standard. The D.C. Court's methodology undermines *Terry* by stripping away relevant facts and evaluating only what remains. This



piecemeal analysis distorts the reality of policing, where suspicion builds cumulatively through a combination of circumstances.

The District of Columbia has a dual prosecution system: both federal and local prosecutors handle cases arising from the same police force. As a result, officers operate under two different sets of Fourth Amendment rules depending on which office brings charges. This inconsistency adds credibility to the argument that only the Supreme Court can restore uniformity.

The National FOP believes strongly that the Supreme Court should grant review in this matter and reaffirm that officers are entitled to rely on the totality of the circumstances. We will be filing an amicus brief in support of the petition for certiorari. In our brief, we intend to highlight the following points. First, the practical realities of policing demand flexibility, not rigid exclusion of certain facts. Second, a fractured legal landscape undermines officer confidence and complicates training. Third, the safety of officers and communities is jeopardized when courts second-guess split-second assessments by filtering out relevant observations.

The Supreme Court's intervention is needed not only to correct the specific errors of the D.C. Court of Appeals but

also to ensure consistent nationwide application of the Fourth Amendment in *Terry* stop cases.

Law enforcement officers deserve clear, uniform rules that respect their training, experience and duty to act in uncertain circumstances. We urge the Supreme Court to grant review and reaffirm the commonsense principle that the Constitution requires examination of the "whole picture" — not selective blindness to obvious red flags.

The National FOP is proud to support this petition through an amicus filing, and we encourage our colleagues in law enforcement and the legal profession to recognize the profound implications of this case for officer safety and effective policing nationwide. **FOP**

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Get to Know Your National Executive Board: National Secretary Jimmy Holderfield

In September 1978, I met Jimmy Holderfield when we were both assigned to the Montgomery Correctional Facility (commonly referred to as the Pea Farm). Jimmy had been hired a month before as an 18-year-old corrections officer, and I joined him the next month. At that time, the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office required anyone wanting to become a police officer to serve at least six months as a correctional officer. I personally feel this was invaluable training for dealing with people, but it also created an environment of distrust between career correctional professionals and those who wanted to become police officers. In 1978, corrections were not allowed to join the FOP in Jacksonville.

Jimmy and I became close friends during our time in corrections, and I was the best man at his wedding in February 1979. The night of his wedding, Jimmy was very nervous and sweating like a politician on a polygraph. I told him that it was not too late to back out and that he could escape through the bathroom window of the church. Needless to say, Jimmy married the love of his life, Pam Holderfield, and she was the best decision he ever made. Pam has been an incredible supporter of her Jimmy — both personally and professionally — and together they have built a great life. Unfortunately, Jimmy shared my advice with Pam, and she still messes with me to this day.

In 1980, Jimmy transitioned to police officer and immediately joined the FOP. He wanted to be involved and was appointed to the Lodge 5-30 cooking crew and political sign shop. Jimmy has never been one to sit on the sidelines, as illustrated by his many accomplishments:

- 1984: Elected secretary of Lodge 5-30



- 1985: Attended his first National Conference in Baltimore
- 1985: Elected first vice president of Lodge 5-30
- 1986: Elected president of Lodge 5-30 and served until 1992, when he did not seek re-election
- 1990: Elected second vice president of the Florida State Lodge
- 1992: Elected president of the Florida State Lodge and served two terms until 1996, when he did not seek re-election
- 1993: Elected as the last National guard and then served as the first National sergeant-at-arms following

the office's name change. He did not seek re-election in 1995.

- 1997: Selected as Member of the Year for the Florida State Lodge
- 1997: Ran for National president but was defeated by Gil Gallegos in a vote of 1,551 to 1,507
- 2012: Appointed to the Jacksonville FOP Foundation and continues to serve in that role today
- 2017–2019: Served as the legislative chairman of the Florida State Lodge
- 2019: Elected as National secretary and has since been elected without opposition in 2021, 2023 and 2025

In his role as local Lodge 5-30



president, Jimmy had some major accomplishments including, but not limited to, the following:

- Defeated the PBA's attempted takeover of Lodge 5-30 during a period when the FOP had become vulnerable
- Made it possible for Jacksonville corrections officers to join Lodge 5-30
- Cultivated an aggressive legislative movement that gained recognition throughout the state of Florida as well as among local elected officials
- Won the right for Jacksonville Corrections to get out of AFSCME and into the FOP bargaining unit
- Was responsible for moving Lodge 5-30 out of a small office and remote clubhouse and into a modern, much larger building at a cost of under half the value of the assets
- Expanded the duties and responsibilities of the executive

board to accommodate better representation of the membership

- Put Jacksonville on the map for being a labor-intensive law enforcement union
- Became Florida State FOP president at a time when it was floundering with a \$50K deficit and turned it into a self-sustaining organization

Over the years, Jimmy has served on numerous committees at the local, state and national level as either a member or chair. These include labor, legal, insurance, building, budget, constitution and by-laws, legislative, pension, personnel, site selection, membership, benefits, education, foundation, memorial, welfare, corrections, grievance and others.

In addition to his many accomplishments with the FOP, Jimmy rose through the ranks in the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office:

- Became a corrections officer in 1978
- Attended the Police Academy in 1980
- Promoted to sergeant
- Promoted to assistant chief
- Promoted to chief
- Promoted to director (retired in that position)

Jimmy has been married to his bride Pam for 46 years, and they have two grown sons, James and Kenny.

The National FOP History Committee members are David L. Stevens (chair, Fla.), James Flores (N.M.), Dewey Stokes (Ohio), Ben Roberts (Texas), Bruce Evaritt (Md.) and Adolph South (Ala.). FOP



Pathways to Excellence: A One-of-a-Kind FOP Educational Experience



Get ready — next year brings a unique opportunity you won't want to miss! **Pathways to Excellence** is a weeklong, all-encompassing FOP educational event that brings together our most popular seminars and summits into one powerful experience.

Whether your focus is **wellness, spirituality, labor, legal or leadership**, there's something here for you. And with our flexible format, you can attend a single session or mix and match multiple sessions based on your time and budget. Plus, we're offering package deals with built-in discounts to make participation even more accessible.

This special event will be held at the **South Point Hotel, Casino & Spa in Las Vegas**, just far enough from the Strip to avoid the chaos, but close enough for a quick rideshare when you're ready for it. We've secured excellent rates for attendees:

- **\$104/night (includes all fees)**, Sunday, March 29–Thursday, April 2
- **Upgrades and extended-stay options will be available**

Registration will open in the coming months, and you won't want to miss it. Slots are expected to fill quickly once it goes live. If you'd like to be among the first notified of open registration, send

an email request to **FOPEducation@NationalFOP.org** and we will put you on our priority list.

The following is a breakdown of what is available to you.

Individual Seminars

Wellness Professionals' Forum — \$200 (Sunday, March 29): This forum brings together professionals working primarily in the mental health and wellness fields for a day of learning and networking. It will include an introduction to FOP wellness initiatives, seminar instruction in working with law enforcement in the wellness arena and a



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PATHWAYS TO EXCELLENCE PACKAGES

Package #1 — \$600	Professionals' Forum + Wellness Summit — Sunday, March 29, through Tuesday, March 31
Package #2 — \$900	Wellness Summit + Leadership Matters — Monday, March 30, through Friday, April 3
Package #3 — \$975	Labor Leadership Summit + Leadership Matters — Monday, March 30, through Friday, April 3
Package #4 — \$550	Excellency in Chaplaincy + Days 2 and 3 of Leadership Matters — Tuesday, March 31, through Friday, April 3

networking event for attendees.

Wellness Summit — \$450 (Monday, March 30 and Tuesday, March 31): This interactive event features over 20 breakout sessions, expert panel discussions and hands-on wellness activities. Attendees will also explore FOP-approved programs — all designed to support the health and well-being of officers, their families and the clinicians who serve them.

Labor Leadership Summit — \$525 (Monday, March 30, and Tuesday, March 31): An exclusive training course designed to equip you with the latest insights and strategies in today's evolving law enforcement environment. Stay ahead of the trends, strengthen your leadership skills and ensure your team is prepared for the challenges ahead.

Legal Counselors Seminar — \$675 (Monday, March 30, and Tuesday, March 31): This seminar offers two days of focused legal training for attorneys representing law enforcement. Topics include *Brady/Giglio*, arbitration, nationwide workers' comp, PTSD, officer wellness, duty to intervene, correctional facility issues, social media, key cases and expert witness use.

Excellency in Chaplaincy — \$300 (Tuesday, March 31, and Wednesday, April 1): Attend the first-ever gathering of FOP chaplains from across America! Enjoy a "back to basics" approach that joins new chaplains with advanced leaders for cutting-edge development opportunities and networking. Learn

from the best, grow and be blessed!

Leadership Matters — \$500 (Wednesday, April 1, through Friday, April 3, ending at noon): Tailored for new and aspiring leaders seeking a comprehensive understanding of everything the FOP offers from a global perspective. Attendees can choose tracks focused on key roles such as lodge secretary or treasurer, or explore topics like conducting effective meetings, Robert's Rules of Order and areas related to labor and legal defense.

Again, if you'd like to be among the first notified when registration opens, just send me an email and I'll add you to our priority notification list.

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





Why I Enrolled: A Member's Perspective on the FOP Legal Defense Plan



When George Ballard looks back on his 30-year law enforcement career — spanning city police, corrections and the sheriff's office — he remembers countless calls, long shifts and the camaraderie of the badge. But one memory stands out above all the rest: the time he nearly lost his career, his livelihood and his good name because he didn't have legal defense coverage. "I thought I was a model officer," Ballard recalls. "I had commendations. I was training other officers. Why would I spend money on legal defense?"

That belief changed in the late 1990s when Ballard, then a field training officer, was accused of excessive force. He knew he had done nothing wrong, but that didn't stop investigators from trying to charge him both administratively and criminally.

"I was offered a chance to resign and just walk away, but I wasn't going to let them take my life away from me," he says. "I knew I hadn't done anything wrong."

Ballard fought to keep his career and his reputation intact, but because

he had not signed up for the FOP Legal Defense Plan, he had to do it on his own.

By the time his name was cleared, his attorney's fees totaled more than \$15,000, an enormous financial burden at the time.

"We insure everything else in our lives. Why wouldn't we insure the thing that supports everything — our career?"

"And that was the bare minimum," Ballard explains. "The attorney was giving me a break on his rates. In

today's world, the same defense could easily run \$50,000 to \$100,000."

A Turning Point

The experience was a wake-up call not only for Ballard but also for his entire department. At the time, only a handful of officers carried legal defense coverage. After seeing what happened to him and another officer involved in the case, the officers in that department made a change.

"From that point on, every single officer in the agency carried legal defense," Ballard says. "When a new officer gets hired, the older officers tell them the story, and they enroll right away. That's how important it became to all of us."

Ballard himself enrolled in the FOP Legal Defense Plan immediately and has carried it ever since. Though he never needed full legal representation again, he often relied on the plan for consultation. "Anytime I had an internal affairs interview, I would call ahead, give them a heads up and they'd advise me what to do," he shares. "Just knowing they were there gave me peace of mind."

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.

Protecting a Career, Protecting a Family

For Ballard, the plan isn't just about legal protection, it's about protecting a way of life.

"The value is the peace of mind," he says. "You have insurance for your car, your house, your life. Why wouldn't you have insurance for your career — the very thing that provides for your family? If you're a law enforcement officer and don't have legal defense, you're gambling with not just your career, but your livelihood and your freedom."

That reassurance made all the difference in his day-to-day work. After his early incident, Ballard continued his career without the constant fear of financial ruin hanging over him. "It let me do my job knowing that if something happened, I was protected. That's priceless," he says.

He even kept coverage into retirement through the Retired Law Enforcement Concealed Carry Plan. "Even now, it's worth it for the peace of mind," he adds. "I've seen firsthand how beneficial this plan is."

Advice for the Next Generation

Now retired, Ballard remains an outspoken advocate for the plan in his role as an FOP lodge president. Younger officers often come to him for advice, especially after high-profile incidents in the news.

"I tell them: put the numbers on paper. If you're planning a 25-year career, add up what you'll pay in dues. Then compare it to the cost of one incident with a good attorney. In today's market, you're looking at \$50,000 or more just to bring an attorney in. The math makes the decision for you," he says.

He's blunt with those who hesitate: "If you don't think you need legal defense, you're gambling with your career. All it takes is one accusation, one incident, one thing being misconstrued — and you'll regret not having it."

A Safety Net That Stands the Test of Time

Since its creation in 1995, the FOP Legal Defense Plan has provided protection to more than 125,000 members, paid out over \$180 million in legal fees and serviced more than

57,000 claims. For those who've faced claims, like Ballard, the plan has been more than a benefit — it has been a career saver.

Ballard sums it up simply: "The plan will help you keep your good name. That's something you can't put a price on."

Why It Matters for Every Stage of a Career

Whether you're just starting your career or are an experienced officer, the risks are real. Officers face scrutiny from every angle — administrative discipline, civil lawsuits and even criminal charges arising directly from doing their jobs. The plan was built specifically to meet these realities, covering administrative, civil and criminal proceedings.

For Ballard, the choice is clear: "It's a no-brainer. We insure everything else in our lives. Why wouldn't we insure the thing that supports everything — our career?"

To learn more or enroll in the FOP Legal Defense Plan, visit foplegal.com. If you have questions, contact your local lodge administrator or call (800) 341-6038. **FOP**



FOP LEGAL DEFENSE PLAN

ADMINISTRATIVE ★ CIVIL ★ CRIMINAL

Protecting Your Future TODAY

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

FOP LEGAL DEFENSE PLAN PRICING

Full Coverage Group and Individual Rate	Two-Coverage Group and Individual Rate	Retired Conceal Carry Coverage
\$324 Annual	\$72 Annual	\$75 Annual
Administrative		
Criminal	Criminal	Criminal
Civil	Civil	Civil

For enrollment and marketing information, please call

1.800.341.6038

foplegal.com



All Roads Lead Back to the CBA

Grievances Are a Path to Justice, Fairness and Reform

In every workplace dispute, one truth remains constant: The collective bargaining agreement (CBA) is the foundation upon which most rights and remedies sit. The CBA defines your rights, your protections and sets the rules for how grievances are handled. Whether you're challenging a termination, a suspension or a procedural misstep, or the denial of another contract benefit, the CBA is the source, and your FOP representative is your strongest ally.

Why Grievances Matter

Grievances are more than paperwork; they're a mechanism for accountability and change. Grievances (1) expose ambiguous or missing contract language, (2) challenge unfair or inconsistent practices, (3) lead to stronger provisions in future CBAs and (4) protect members from unjust discipline.

Just the Facts:

>> Collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) define your rights and protections and outline the process for resolving grievances. To be effective, a grievance must be clear, specific and grounded in the CBA. Whether you're challenging a termination, a suspension, a procedural error or the denial of a contract benefit, the CBA is your foundation, and your FOP representative is your strongest advocate.

Every filed grievance is an opportunity to reinforce the integrity of the CBA and ensure that the employer follows it to the letter. A strong grievance is clear, specific and rooted in the CBA. While every grievance is unique to its own facts, it is important to create a form. The form acts as both a template and a checklist to ensure that nothing is left out. There are things that must be included:

- **Grievant information:** Name, classification, supervisor

- **Loss incurred:** Suspension, demotion, termination, denial of overtime, denial of PTO, etc.
- **CBA violations:** List of all relevant articles
- **Facts of the case:** Who, what, where, when, how
- **Requested remedy:** Reinstatement, back pay, file correction, future compliance

Continued on page 34 >

Check out FOP.net

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

You have the power of the FOP at your fingertips with easy access to all the information you need, including:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| + Law enforcement news | + Legal defense | + Training |
| + FOP updates and events | + Legislation | + Wellness resources |
| + Member benefits | + Labor issues | + And much more! |



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- Support agencies through purchase & onboarding

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- Sales experience helpful, not required

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LABOR NEWS

Continued from page 32 >

Case Spotlight Example

- **Grievant info:** Roger Mayberry. Classification: Officer. Supervisor name and date.
- **Violation:** Article 1 and Article 2 — Officer Mayberry was terminated without just cause. The agency failed to follow the termination procedures outlined in the CBA.
- **Remedy requested:** Reinstatement with full back pay and restoration of benefits. Removal of all references to termination from personnel file. Mandated adherence to termination procedures in all future cases. Any other relief necessary to make Officer Mayberry whole as if he were never terminated.

Always Be Professional

When engaging with the employer, avoid arguments. Instead, use this respectful phrase: “The FOP respectfully disagrees with your

statement/opinion/position.” This keeps the tone civil while asserting your position with strength and clarity. Anticipate that the employer will deny the grievance, and be prepared to continue moving it forward. **Do not** miss any deadlines in the CBA.

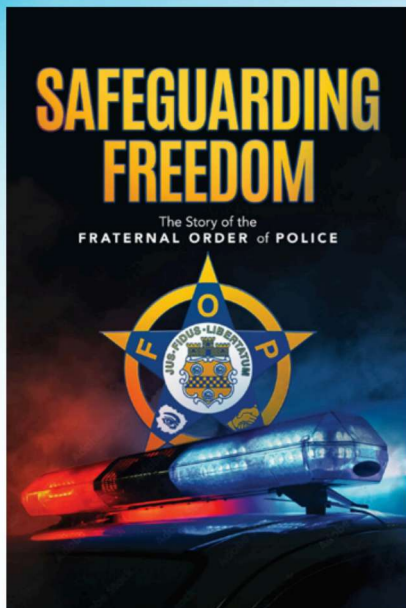
Final Thought

Grievances are not just about resolving individual disputes —they’re about protecting the bargaining unit. Every time we stand up for one member, we reinforce the rights of all. Let’s continue to use the CBA as our compass and ensure every officer is treated with dignity, fairness and respect. Grievances put the employer on notice: **When the CBA is ignored, we will take action.**

For support in collective bargaining and labor representation, call the Division of Labor Services today at (800) 451-2711 or email labor@fop.net. **FOP**



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



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.



The FOP Store

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Momentum in Miami: Where Purpose Met Passion



I'm deeply humbled and honored to have been re-elected to serve for a third term as National Auxiliary president. Thank you for your continued support, your trust and your belief in the work we're doing together.

Leadership is a privilege, and I do not take it lightly. I remain committed to serving with integrity, transparency and heart.

Together, we will continue building on the momentum we've started — rooted in tradition, driven by purpose and united by our commitment to support officers and their families.

Highlights From the National Conference

This year's conference was a powerful reflection of our shared commitment — with inspiring speakers, meaningful presentations and important business accomplished.

Wellness at the forefront:

- "Helping Law Enforcement Families During These Difficult Times" presented by Vice President Kristina Waters and Kentucky delegate Sarah Russell
- "Legacy Go-Bag and Financial Planning" presented by Nick Daugherty, FinancialCop president/owner

Guest speakers:

- "Blue Family Focus and Power of Peers" — Sherri Martin, National FOP director of wellness
- "The Mission of C.O.P.S." — Connie Moyer, National C.O.P.S. president
- "Support for Families of the Fallen" — Dianne Bernhard, C.O.P.S. executive director

Organizational updates and member contributions:

- Linda Hennie shared financial assistance opportunities for leadership training.

The National Fraternal Order Of Police Auxiliary
2025-2027 Executive Board

	Glenda Lehmann President	
	Linda Hennie Past- President	
	Amber Steele Recording Secretary	
	Lori Green Treasurer	
	Julie Black Sergeant At Arms	
		Debbie Swofford Chair of Trustees

- Lori Green introduced a customizable constitution/bylaws template to be used by local auxiliaries.
- Charlotte Scoggins launched the Kids REACH bag initiative and DART truck care kits.
- Brother Alex Swofford shared his

inspiring Special Olympics journey.

New delegate reception:

- Eighteen first-time delegates attended — thanks to Committee Chairs Julie Doong and Lizbeth Gragg for a fun and welcoming afternoon.

2025–2027 Trustee Territory Assignments

Home State	Trustee	Assigned Territory
Alabama	Vacant	Mississippi, Louisiana
D.C.	Bonnie Cannon	Delaware, Maryland
Georgia	Ramona Stone	Florida, South Carolina
Illinois	Cynthia Draege	Nebraska, South Dakota
Indiana	Jennifer Klasner-Allendorf	Missouri, Iowa, Wyoming
Kentucky	Kim McElroy	Alaska, Hawaii, Montana
Michigan	Debbie Swofford	Minnesota, North Dakota, Wisconsin
New Mexico	Sharon Valtierra	Arizona, California, Nevada
North Carolina	Ally Michalec	Connecticut, New Jersey
Ohio	Cherie Siehl	New York, West Virginia
Oklahoma	Kim Tryon	Colorado, Kansas
Pennsylvania	Ann Cammerota	Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont
Tennessee	Lizbeth (Beth) Gragg	Arkansas, Texas
Utah	Julie Doong	Idaho, Oregon, Washington
Virginia	Becky Edwards	Massachusetts, Rhode Island

Honoring Outgoing Leaders

We thank the following for their dedicated service and lasting impact:

- Vice President Kristina Waters
- Chair of Trustees Connie Barnes
- Georgia Trustee Charlotte Scoggins
- New Mexico Trustee Linda Brown
- North Carolina Trustee Melody Joyce
- Ohio Trustee Peggy Mohr
- Oklahoma Trustee Sharri Daily
- Virginia Trustee Florence Votava

Looking Ahead

Welcome to the 2025–2027 National Auxiliary Executive Board:

- President Glenda Lehmann
- Vice President KaSandra Newman
- Past President Linda Hennie
- Recording Secretary Amber Steele
- Financial Secretary Susan Vargo

- Treasurer Lori Green
- Sergeant-at-Arms Julie Black
- Second Vice President Donna Giuliani
- Chair of Trustees Deborah Swofford

Upcoming Initiatives

Auxiliary Circles and Virtual Chats:

We will be hosting informal Zoom meetings with rotating themes. These sessions offer meaningful impact and practical guidance. Here are a few:

- **Chartering an Auxiliary** — step-by-step guidance for forming a local Auxiliary, from paperwork to purpose
- **Volunteering for Police Week** — how to get involved, what to expect and why your presence matters
- **Understanding the Connections**

for May 15 — PSOB, C.O.P.S., NLEOMF, FOP and the Auxiliary

Watch for announcements on Facebook, the FOP website and upcoming editions of the *Journal*.

The trustees listed on this page will be making outreach to the National FOP trustees in each state to introduce themselves and share contact information. Defined territories streamline outreach and make it easier for lodges to know whom to contact for Auxiliary support.

As we move forward, we must continue growing our reach, embracing new generations of Auxiliary members and deepening the support we provide to our law enforcement community.

Thank you for your service to each of you who has ever worn, or is now wearing, the badge. God bless you and God bless the families behind the badge. **FOP**

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Dispatch Supervisor, Ada County ID Sheriff's Department



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