

September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center, and later the natural disaster of Hurricane Katrina, demonstrated how critical it is for first responders to be able to communicate with each other in order to protect our nation's communities and themselves.

NAPO will continue to urge the FCC, the Administration and Congress to recognize that this is the time to develop a nationwide interoperable network and to support the reallocation of the D Block to public safety.

Senate Narrows Crack-Cocaine Sentencing Ratio

On March 17, 2010, the Senate passed by unanimous consent the "Fair Sentencing Act of 2009," S. 1789, which will create an 18:1 sentencing ratio for crack and powder cocaine offenses. It will establish a 5-year mandatory minimum for simple possession of 28 grams of crack cocaine, while possession of 280 grams of crack will trigger a 10-year mandatory minimum. Importantly, this legislation will mandate that the United States Sentencing Commission significantly increase sentencing enhancements for drug offenses – both crack and powder cocaine – involving aggravating factors. These sentencing enhancements will target and punish those who bring the most destruction to our neighborhoods: dealers or sellers who use violence or weapons, or cause injury to or threaten others, regardless of the form of cocaine.

When it was first introduced in October 2009, the "Fair Sentencing Act of 2009" would have eliminated the present 100:1 sentencing ratio for crack and powder cocaine offenses and instead create a 5-year mandatory minimum for simple possession of 500 grams of either crack or powder cocaine. However, after five months of negotiations with lawmakers, particularly **Senators Richard Durbin** (D-IL) and **Lindsey Graham** (R-SC), NAPO was able to get our

concerns regarding the elimination of the sentencing disparity recognized in new legislative language, which became the final legislation that passed the Senate.

NAPO understands that crack cocaine has proved to be more closely linked to violence and despair on the streets and thus presents a greater danger to our nation's communities and law enforcement. Furthermore, as crack is usually sold in much smaller quantities than powder cocaine, NAPO believes that completely eliminating the sentencing disparity would have negatively affected the work law enforcement has done to protect our nation's communities from the crime and violence associated with crack cocaine.

While NAPO was able to reach a compromise on the crack cocaine sentencing disparity in the Senate, passing the "Fair Sentencing Act," as passed by the Senate, will be an uphill battle in the House. **John Conyers** (D-MI), Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, and **Bobby Scott** (D-VA), Chairman of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security are determined to eliminate the sentencing disparity. NAPO believes it will only be through bipartisanship and strong Republican support that we will be able to pass S. 1789 in the House.

Update: Status Of NAPO's Legislative Priorities

National Public Safety Collective Bargaining (H.R. 413/ S. 1611/ S. 3194): As mentioned in the previous article, NAPO is making progress on moving the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act forward. On April 13, 2010, NAPO took another step towards final passage of this important bill when **Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid** reintroduced the legislation in the Senate as S. 3194. By reintroducing the bill on the Senate floor, S. 3194 can bypass committee action and go straight to the Senate floor for a vote. We are working with the Majority Leader on timing and procedures for taking up the bill on the floor.

Law Enforcement Officer Bill of Rights (H.R. 1972): The Law Enforcement Officer's Procedural Bill of Rights Act currently has the support of 3 cosponsors and is sitting in the House Judiciary Committee awaiting action. In the Senate, **Senator Mitch McConnell** (R-KY), our primary Republican sponsor of the bill, is currently seeking, with NAPO's help, a Democrat cosponsor to champion the legislation with him. It has been a long process with several candidates and, unfortunately, it seems that Senator McConnell is in no rush to introduce this legislation, despite pressure from NAPO. We continue to work with Senator McConnell to introduce this important legislation.

With no bill in the Senate, NAPO is focusing our efforts on getting cosponsors for H.R. 1972. In the 110th Congress, this legislation had the support of 61 cosponsors and we need to match that level of cosponsors for H.R. 1972 in order to give the Judiciary Committee incentive to move the legislation. Last Congress, **Judiciary Committee Chairman John Conyers** made it clear he had little desire to move this legislation for us, so we need all the support we can get. Please contact your Congressional representatives and urge them to sign on as a cosponsor of H.R. 1972.

Repealing the GPO and WEP (H.R. 235 / S. 484): The House and Senate versions of the Social Security Fairness Act have strong support. H.R. 235 has 323

cosponsors and S. 484 has 31. This legislation is very popular with members of Congress; however, as we have learned from previous Congresses, when it comes to moving the legislation forward, lawmakers who have cosponsored the bill become unreliable and often unwilling to act. The biggest obstacle in the way of passing the Social Security Fairness Act is the cost. Last Congress, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that eliminating the GPO and WEP would cost the federal government \$80 billion dollars over ten years. NAPO believes that \$80 billion is not a cost, but rather money that has been unfairly taken from public employees and their families and should be returned to give back retirement security to public sector employees. NAPO continues to push for action and we hope to get some movement on this important legislation in Committee.

COPS Hiring Funding: In addition to the \$1 billion NAPO helped secure for the program in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in February 2009, the COPS hiring program received \$298 million for fiscal 2010. As mentioned in NAPO's March edition of the *Washington Report*, the President's budget calls for \$600 million for the COPS hiring program for fiscal 2011. As Congress begins the appropriations process for the next fiscal year, NAPO is working with lawmakers to ensure that the hiring program receives at least the President's requested funding level for fiscal 2011.

For fiscal 2010 grant funds, the COPS Office is not taking new applications, but is selecting hiring program grantees from the existing pool of approximately 6,000 2009 COPS Hiring Recovery Program (CHRP) applications. These are the 6,000 applications that did not receive any funding under CHRP. The COPS Office expects to make fewer than 500 awards with the amount of funding available. Additionally, the COPS Office will continue to waive the 25% local match and the \$75,000 per officer salary cap, allowing the program to provide 100% funding on approved salaries and benefits for three years. ■

That's When The Fight Started...

I asked my wife, "Where do you want to go for our anniversary?"

It warmed my heart to see her face melt in sweet appreciation.

"Somewhere I haven't been in a long time!" she said.

So I suggested, "How about the kitchen?"

And that's when the fight started...

My wife and I were watching *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire* while we were in bed.

I turned to her and said, "Do you want to get romantic?"

"No," she answered.

I then said, "Is that your final answer?"

She didn't even look at me this time, simply saying "Yes."

So I said, "Then I'd like to phone a friend."

And that's when the fight started...

Saturday morning I got up early, quietly dressed, made my lunch, grabbed the dog, and slipped quietly into the garage...

I hooked up the boat up to the truck, and proceeded to back out into a torrential downpour.

The wind was blowing 50 mph, so I pulled back into the garage, turned on the radio, and discovered that the weather would be bad all day. I went back into the house, quietly undressed, and slipped back into bed. I cuddled up to my wife's back, now with a different anticipation, and whispered, "The weather out there is terrible."

My loving wife of 10 years replied, "Can you believe my stupid husband is out fishing in that?"

And that's when the fight started...

My wife and I were sitting at a table at my high school reunion, and I kept staring at a drunken lady swigging her drink as she sat alone at a nearby table.

My wife asked, "Do you know her?"

"Yes," I sighed, "She's my old girlfriend. I understand she took to drinking right after we split up those many years ago, and I hear she hasn't been sober since."

"My goodness!" said my wife, "who would think a person could go on celebrating that long?"

And that's when the fight started...

Need to contact the PBA?

Call: 1-800-733-3722