



National Association of Police Organizations

NAPO News

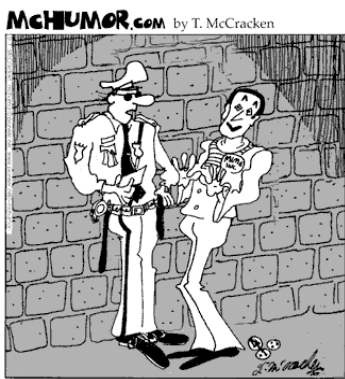
Presidential Candidates Vie For NAPO's Endorsement



Former PBA attorney Bill Johnson is the Executive Director of NAPO.

The National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO) is a coalition of law enforcement unions and associations from across the United States that serves to advance the interests of America's law enforcement and corrections officers through legislative and legal advocacy, political action and education. Founded in 1978, NAPO now represents more than 2,000 police unions and associations, 236,000 sworn law enforcement officers, 11,000 retired officers and more than 100,000 citizens who share a common dedication to fair and effective crime control and law enforcement. Florida PBA, Palm Beach County PBA, and Dade County PBA are members of NAPO.

www.napo.org



"You have the right to remain silent."

A doctor calls his patient and says, "The check you gave me for my bill came back."

The patient replied: "So did my arthritis!"

With the 2008 Presidential elections quickly approaching, presidential candidates **John McCain** and **Barack Obama** have made substantial efforts to reach out to NAPO to win our endorsement. NAPO makes its presidential endorsement during our annual convention that takes place the summer of the election year, which, this year, was NAPO's 30th Annual Convention in Puerto Rico, July 30 – August 4.

On July 31, during NAPO's Executive Board meeting, both candidates called in separately for a conference call with NAPO's elected officers and area vice presidents. **Executive Director Bill Johnson** took the lead on the conference calls, asking both candidates questions regarding the Association's top priorities. Topics discussed included the creation of a national Law Enforcement Officer Bill of Rights, collective bargaining, funding for state and local law enforcement grant programs, the extradition of cop-killers from Mexico, racial profiling legislation and the importance of giving NAPO a seat at the table when it comes to making decisions that affect the rank-and-file law enforcement community.

Both candidates voiced their strong support and gratitude toward America's law enforcement and promised that NAPO's voice would be heard when it came to developing and implementing policies that concern state and local law enforcement. Their positions on NAPO's priorities reflect the beliefs and goals of their respective party plat-

forms, each of which focus federal support of state and local law enforcement in different ways. John McCain believes that most decisions regarding state and local law enforcement belong at the state and local level, while Barack Obama believes that the federal government has a larger role to play in regard to state and local law enforcement.

Both candidates made impressive arguments to our Executive Board as to why NAPO should endorse them. In addition to the conference calls, both campaigns sent surrogates to address NAPO's 200 assembled delegates during the last day of the convention. **Former Oklahoma Governor Frank Keating** spoke on behalf of the McCain campaign and **Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr.** represented the Obama campaign. After Governor Keating and Senator Biden spoke, the NAPO delegates, representing NAPO's member organizations, cast votes first on a motion for NAPO to endorse Barack Obama for President. This vote did not get the two-thirds majority necessary to pass. After that vote failed, the delegates cast votes on a motion for NAPO to endorse John McCain for President, which also was not able to get a two-thirds majority. According to NAPO's bylaws, due to the inability to get a two-thirds majority in favor of either candidate, the vote went to the Executive Board. It only requires a simple majority vote by the Board to endorse a candidate. The Executive Board will meet in the near future to decide who NAPO will endorse for President.

NAPO-Endorsed FISA Bill Signed Into Law

On July 10, 2008, **President Bush** signed into law an electronic surveillance bill that will overhaul and modernize the 30-year-old Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA). Over the past year, final passage of this legislation has been stalled due to a congressional standoff over the issue of granting retroactive legal immunity to telecommunications companies being sued for their cooperation in the federal government's surveillance program after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Understanding the necessity of passing the FISA legislation, Democratic and Republican Congressional leadership began discussions at the beginning of the year over compromise language. However, negotiations were halted numerous times because House Democrats were unwilling to accept the immunity provision as part of the bill and Senate Republicans vowed to block any bill that did not protect telecommunications companies from prosecution.

In March, NAPO stepped into the fray, urging lawmakers to support the retroactive immunity provision. By June, a compromise was made: a federal district court will rule that all existing lawsuits against third parties that assisted in surveillance would be waived if there was "substantial evidence" they received written assurances that the program was legal and authorized by the president. NAPO supports this compromise, which was passed by Congress on June 9, and is certain that the court will dismiss the lawsuits.

NAPO believes that after the tragedies of September 11, 2001, telecommunications firms fulfilled what they perceived to be their patriotic duty in responding to the government's request for assistance in gathering intelligence. We feel that these firms should not come under legal action for responding to requests authorized by the President and the Attorney General. It is unfair to subject these companies to costly civil lawsuits and damaged reputations merely for cooperating with their government.

Additionally, granting retroactive immunity to telecommunications companies is necessary to avoid establishing a very dangerous precedent that would act as a strong disincentive for individual companies and even entire industries to assist law enforcement at any level of government. We believe granting immunity is essential to preserving the cooperative relationship between the government and private industry.

The federal government alone cannot fight the war on terror. It depends on state and local governments, as well as the private sector, to help prevent the next terrorist attack. We need to strengthen, not weaken, these established partnerships. NAPO feels that in providing retroactive immunity for companies that cooperated in the government's war on terror, we have taken an important step toward keeping our nation safe.

Experts Tell Congress That Public Pensions Getting Retirement Right

A panel of experts testified on July 10, 2008, before the U.S. Joint Economic Committee (JEC) that state and local pensions are getting retirement right and no new Federal requirements are needed.

The Committee also heard testimony that pensions are fundamental to ensuring retirement security for American workers. But, less understood is the critical role pension funds play in stimulating the U.S. economy and providing long-term, patient investment capital for businesses, technology, and medical advancements.

NAPO – together with 19 other national organizations representing state and local governments and officials, public employee unions, public retirement systems, and more than 20 million state and local government

employees, retirees, and their beneficiaries—submitted a letter for the record to the JEC. The letter provides key facts on the benefits and strengths of the nation's state and local retirement system. We also commend the JEC for examining the need to strengthen retirement security and economic growth in our country.

The hearing entitled, "Your Money, Your Future: Public Pension Plans and the Need to Strengthen Retirement Security and Economic Growth" was convened by U.S. **Senator Robert P. Casey** (D-PA).

At the hearing, **Congressman Earl Pomeroy** (D-ND) declared that it was "a good day" for pensions on two fronts. The first piece of good news, he said, is that Senator Casey has convened the hearing to examine the economic and