



NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION 2013 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

DOJ KEY LAW ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS

- **BYRNE JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT (JAG) PROGRAM:** Byrne JAG is the only formula based program for local law enforcement and the backbone of many programs to control and prevent crime. The vast majority of states use this funding to operate and fund officers for multi-jurisdictional drug and gang task forces. NSA urges Congress to provide significant funding for the Byrne JAG Program. Such funding will help to restore funding for the drastic cuts in recent fiscal years and enable drug and gang taskforces across the country to continue their operations and avoid shutting down.

- **OFFICE OF COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES (COPS):** Since its inception in 1994, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services has provided law enforcement agencies with the necessary resources to mount effective anti-crime programs. Throughout its history, the COPS Office has provided grants to assist law enforcement agencies with the hiring of new officers to enhance and promote community policing; update vital law enforcement technology; strengthen school safety to ensure our children have a safe and secure environment to learn; assist tribal territories; prosecute child sexual predators; and enhance methamphetamine reduction efforts. NSA urges Congress to provide significant funding for the COPS Office, particularly as it is the only federal program available to assist sheriffs in hiring deputies.
 - **COPS METH PROGRAM:** It is essential that law enforcement have the tools necessary to swiftly dismantle and clean-up meth labs they take down, particularly given the dangers and health risks meth labs pose to communities nationwide. To assist state and local law enforcement with the clean-up of meth labs, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has administered funding on behalf of the COPS Office, specifically the COPS Meth Program. This funding enables state and local law enforcement agencies to contact the DEA when a meth lab has been dismantled. The DEA then takes steps to hire specially-trained hazmat contractors to clean-up the lab and properly dispose of hazardous materials found in the lab. NSA urges Congress to provide significant funding for the COPS Meth Program.

- **STATE CRIMINAL ALIEN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SCAAP):** SCAAP is a reimbursement program for local governments that shoulder the costs associated with processing

and detaining illegal aliens—which is a federal responsibility. NSA urges Congress to provide significant funding for this critical program.

- **BULLETPROOF VEST PARTNERSHIP (BVP) GRANT PROGRAM:** NSA supports legislation to reauthorize the Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) Act that has enabled the purchase of more than a million vests for law enforcement officers throughout the United States. Related to that reauthorization, NSA supports provisions that would extend the mandatory wear policy requirements enforced for BVPA grantees to other federal streams of funding that allow the purchase of body armor, as well as provisions ensuring unique fit of vests to individual officers – for reasons of safety and personal comfort.

DHS KEY LAW ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS

- **STATE AND LOCAL FUNDING:** NSA continues to advocate for critical state and local homeland security funding that enables state and local agencies to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from acts of terrorism and other catastrophic events. NSA urges Congress to provide sufficient funding for these critical homeland security programs.

NSA STRONGLY OPPOSES

- **COLLECTIVE BARGAINING:** NSA strongly opposes legislation that would federalize collective bargaining for public safety officers, thereby forcing sheriffs and peace officers to adhere to strict guidelines when dealing with the public safety workforce. The needs of law enforcement agencies and their communities vary significantly depending on their size and locality. Previously introduced legislation has failed to make this distinction, thereby doing law enforcement a great disservice. NSA believes that the decision to engage in collective bargaining should be solely left up to the states and localities, not a “one-size-fits-all” federal approach.

NSA SUPPORTS

- **HATCH ACT LEGISLATION:** NSA supports further amendments to the Hatch Act to allow sheriffs in their official capacities to participate in political activities; and to implement a statute of limitations for the Office of Special Counsel of no more than 6 months to file charges of a violation.
- **MENTALLY ILL OFFENDERS:** Over the last few decades, the nation’s jails have become the largest mental health hospitals. Determined to find a solution to this problem and ensure that mentally ill offenders receive the help they need, NSA supports the **Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act**, introduced by Senator Al Franken (D-MN) and Congressman Richard Nugent (R-FL). The bill would reauthorize and make improvements to the Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act (MIOTCRA) which supports collaborative programs that address the needs of justice-involved individuals with mental health conditions. It provides for a five year extension of the program; increases resources for veterans treatment courts; increases focuses on resources and training for jails and prisons; and funds innovative training at law enforcement academies.

OTHER LEGISLATIVE ISSUES INCLUDE

- **COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM:** NSA has been closely monitoring the issue of comprehensive immigration reform and continues to advocate for enhanced border security initiatives.