



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

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CHUCK CANTERBURY
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

JAMES O. PASCO, JR.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

TO: State Lodge Presidents
DATE: 20 July 2017
RE: Call to Action for FOP Members

Don't let the media or politicians misrepresent the asset forfeiture program

Chuck Canterbury, National President of the Fraternal Order of Police, called on FOP members to speak out in local media in support of yesterday's announcement by U.S. Attorney General Jefferson B. Sessions III that the Federal asset forfeiture program would be restored and expanded.

This is a vital tool for law enforcement, especially for those State and local agencies who use the equitable sharing program to allow them to reinvest resources to fight crime in their communities. Unfortunately, there has been a flood of poorly researched media stories attacking the program written by folks who don't seem to understand it actually works. Our members in every State should make sure their local media outlets know the truth—this program helps communities and makes them safer.

The program will enable law enforcement to target criminal organizations—cartels, gangs and traffickers by seizing their profits from unlawful activity. This enables law enforcement to weaken the power and reach of these organizations, preventing future crimes. Civil asset forfeiture helps victims of crime and can provide material support to law enforcement for things like bullet-resistant vests, opioid overdose rescue kits and improved training. The seizures also get drugs, illegal firearms, ammunition and explosives off the streets.

Some politicians have, or will, also come out swinging against the program. These politicians need to hear from us on this issue. The new policies create several new protections for innocent property owners, increased oversight and greater transparency. This program has a long history in law enforcement of success and these elected Chicken Littles need to hear from us that the sky is not falling. It is an important tool and we're pleased to have it restored and rejuvenated in this Administration.