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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
9 NOVEMBER 2018**

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FOP Supports Sessions Memorandum on Consent Decrees

Chuck Canterbury, National President of the Fraternal Order of Police, applauded a recent memorandum outlining the policy of the U.S. Department of Justice with respect to using lawsuits and imposing consent decrees on local governments. U.S. Attorney General Jefferson B. Sessions III signed the document on his final day in office.

“Once again, Jeff Sessions delivered on the promises made to law enforcement by the President and his Administration,” Canterbury said. “Under the previous Administration, the Justice Department was not always a good partner and often rejected cooperative and collaborative efforts to improve policing in our communities and chose instead to use heavy-handed and coercive methods like lawsuits and consent decrees to impose their will on local agencies.

The memorandum, issued by the Justice Department on 7 November, sets down the principles and procedures for those few occasions when a consent decree or legal settlement may be necessary. It would ensure that consent decrees will not be lengthy, open-ended arrangements with burdensome requirements or long-term negative economic impacts. The agreements will be limited to a reasonable amount of time and be “narrowly tailored” to address specific issues within a local agency.

“The FOP and the entire law enforcement community will greatly miss Jeff Sessions as our nation’s top cop,” Canterbury said. “He served this Administration with distinction and integrity and, as one of his final actions, he demonstrated once again that he held our nation’s law enforcement officers and their work in the very highest regard. He went to work every day to help keep us safe and we are grateful for his efforts.”

The Fraternal Order of Police is the largest law enforcement labor organization in the United States with more than 345,000 members.