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STATEMENT FROM FOP NATIONAL PRESIDENT PATRICK YOES ON THE TERMINATION OF NYPD OFFICER DANIEL PANTALEO

It is very disappointing to see that New York City Police Commissioner James P. O'Neill caved to political pressure and fired New York City Police Officer Daniel Pantaleo today.

In his statement, the Commissioner acknowledged the decision was likely to anger the rank-and-file officers and admitted he would be mad too if he were still a cop. This tells you all you need to know—Commissioner O'Neill knows this was the wrong decision and that it sends the wrong message to the entire NYPD and to law enforcement officers everywhere.

Law enforcement officers must make split-second decisions often with their life or another's in the balance. Officer Pantaleo acted as he was trained to do while under the direct supervision of a sergeant. It didn't matter; he was fired for doing his job and, in failing to protect the integrity of the NYPD, Commissioner O'Neill didn't do his.

This firing will have a chilling effect on how officers, in the NYPD and elsewhere, do their jobs in the future. It will have a chilling effect on how our profession retains and recruits the best possible people for a very difficult and dangerous profession—which is made much more difficult when political expediency supplants common sense.

At a time when law enforcement officers are being openly harassed on the streets they protect—even when responding to gunfire—it is very frustrating to know that you cannot always count on your agency leadership to do the right thing.