



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

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STEVE YOUNG
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

JERRY W. ATNIP
NATIONAL SECRETARY

November 5, 2001

Dear Senator,

I am writing on behalf of the Fraternal Order of Police to ask for your vote on an issue of critical importance to our nation's law enforcement officers.

As you may know, the passage of S. 952, the "Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act," is one of the highest priorities of our organization. The language of this bill has been offered as an amendment to H.R. 3061, the appropriations measure for the Departments of Education, Labor and Health and Human Services, by Senate Majority Leader Thomas A. Daschle. Cloture on the amendment has been filed and the vote will take place sometime on Tuesday afternoon. We are asking that you support cloture and let this amendment be voted on by the Senate.

Contrary to the hyperbole being employed by some organizations, the amendment does NOT require "compulsory unionization" of our nation's public safety employees. In fact, the amendment contains language protecting those States that have enacted "right to work" legislation. The vitriolic attacks on this legislation, and, by extension, on the brave men and women in uniform who would benefit from it, come at a time when law enforcement faces its greatest challenge in the history of the Republic. While police officers nationwide are working twelve hour shifts, seven days a week, some police executives and their surrogates are also working overtime in an effort to deprive rank-and-file police officers of a basic right afforded to workers in every other profession.

It should be noted that the vast majority of police officers involved in response to, and the investigation of, the terrorist acts and threats since September 11 operate under collective bargaining contracts. The New York City Police Department, the U.S. Capitol Police, the U.S. Postal Police, the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department, the Defense Protective Service, the New York Port Authority Police and others all have current collective bargaining contracts—and they have performed magnificently in protecting the public and investigating these crimes. Law enforcement officers take their oath and commitment to protect and serve seriously—police officers do not engage in work stoppages, slowdowns, or strikes. In fact, these practices would be prohibited by the bill. The same law enforcement executives who sanctimoniously praise these brave men and women to their faces are working to deprive them of their rights behind their backs.

Until this language becomes law, public safety employees—the men and women we rely on in a crisis or a disaster—will continue to be denied any opportunity to influence the decisions which affect their careers and livelihoods. This legislation leaves the majority of the decisions to the States and their legislatures. It sets very basic, minimum standards and, in the absence of State action, addresses the unique situation of the public safety officer by creating a special collective bargaining right outside the scope of Federal labor law, relying on the procedures and expertise of the Federal Labor Relations Authority to settle disputes.

On behalf of the more than 299,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I am asking for your vote in favor of cloture and S.A. 2044. If I can be of any further assistance, or provide additional information about the bill, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco at my Washington office.

Sincerely,

Steve Young
National President

The Voice of Our Nation's Law Enforcement Officers®