



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

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WASHINGTON, DC 20002

PATRICK YOES
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

JIM PASCO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2 December 2025

The Honorable John R. Thune
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable J. Michael Johnson
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Minority Leader
United State Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Hakeem S. Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senators Thune and Schumer, Mr. Speaker and Representative Jeffries,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to strongly urge that Congress include robust counter-unmanned aircraft systems (counter-UAS) authorities for State and local agencies in the final FY 2026 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

As you know, the National Fraternal Order of Police has been advocating for these authorities for some time, but Congress has failed to act on this issue—which is particularly problematic given that the United States is poised to host the 2026 World Cup and the 2028 Olympics. This issue should not be a last-minute provision folded into the NDAA, but it is preferable to address this issue in this legislation now than risk further inaction.

State and local law enforcement require unequivocal legal authority to detect, track, identify, and intercept drones that endanger lives, infrastructure, public safety, and national security. The current patchwork of laws is woefully inadequate, and the proliferation of the threat we face from the criminal use of drones is very real. It is past time to rectify this critical vulnerability. The current patchwork of laws is woefully inadequate, allowing this menace to proliferate unchecked, and we must act now to rectify this critical vulnerability and deliver real, actionable capabilities in the final version of the NDAA.

We must update counter-UAS provisions that would authorize specially trained State and local law enforcement personnel to execute operations at high-risk sites, including large-scale public gatherings, critical infrastructure, and correctional facilities. The National FOP believes that we need to establish a nationwide framework backed by rigorous Federal training standards, vetted technology approvals, and stringent oversight mechanisms. We need to address the magnitude of the threat head-on, equipping agencies with the tools to operate effectively while prioritizing safeguards for civil liberties, privacy, and airspace integrity. Anything less would be a dereliction of duty in the face of a rapidly intensifying crisis.

State and local public safety agencies nationwide are grappling with a dangerous and expanding capability gap that leaves communities exposed. Drones are being weaponized at an

alarming rate—from smuggling deadly contraband like fentanyl, weapons, and cell phones into prisons, where incidents have skyrocketed from just 23 in 2018 to a staggering 479 in 2024, to disrupting emergency response operations by interfering with firefighting aircraft and medical evacuations, delaying life-saving interventions and endangering first responders. Over 3,000 unauthorized drone sightings near U.S. airports since 2021 alone underscore the pervasive risk to aviation and public safety.

Congress must enact a sweeping counter-UAS regime that authorizes trained personnel to neutralize illegal drone operations swiftly and safely, closing this unacceptable gap before it results in catastrophe.

On behalf of the 382,000 members of the FOP, we urge Congress—in the strongest possible terms—to include (counter-UAS) authorities for State and local agencies in the final FY 2026 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). If we can provide any additional information on this issue, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in our Washington, D.C. office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Yoes", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Patrick Yoes
National President

cc: Travis Gutzmer, President, South Dakota State Lodge
Tony Harrison, National Trustee, South Dakota State Lodge
Darrell Basco, President, Louisiana State Lodge
Kelly Gibson, National Trustee, Louisiana State Lodge
Mike Essig, President, New York State Lodge
Joseph Battaglia, National Trustee, New York State Lodge