

Ohio Police



March 2025

www.fopohio.org

Issue #7

FOP OF OHIO TO WORK FOR LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

FOP of Ohio Lobby Day Scheduled!!!

President Jay McDonald has called for members from across the state to come to our annual Lobby Day at the Ohio Statehouse on April 2, 2025.

The FOP legislative priorities include pensions, civilian review board legislation and arming our state employees. We are also very concerned about anti-union bills that have been introduced.

We will do everything for you, your appointments, talking points and lunch will be provided.

Please email Travis Parker (tparker@fopohio.org) with your name, address and Lodge so we can get your appointments made for you.



Anti-Union Legislation

The Ohio General Assembly is heating up and there is a certain contingent in the Ohio Statehouse who is certainly averse to public employees ability to collectively bargain.

Senate Bill 1 limits the topics college professors can bargain over to wages only; eliminates tenure and prohibits their right to strike.

Senate Bill 8 outlaws public employee unions, including us, from having release time for union officials in our mutually agreed upon collective bargaining agreements.

State Rep. Levi Dean from the 71st House District (Greene County and others) is looking for co-sponsors for a Right to Work law for all union members, public and private, and has criminal penalties for some union provisions.

In Utah, the legislature passed and the Governor signed a complete repeal of their state public employee collective bargaining law.

The attacks on our right to represent our members are increasing!



Update on the tragedy in St. Clair Township

Lodge 210 President Dakota Wetzel, who was shot in the head by an unstable and violent suspect. In the resulting shootout, 4 year-old Rosalie Martin was shot and killed.

The FOP of Ohio Foundation established a fundraiser for both Dakota and the family of Rosalie. As of February 25, the fundraiser brought in \$47,653.20, which will be split evenly between both parties.

Thank you to all of the lodges and members who contributed to this very worthwhile cause and helping a FOP Lodge leader and the family of a truly innocent victim who lost her life due to the actions of a bad guy with a gun.



**4-YEAR-OLD GIRL FATALY SHOT
WHILE SITTING AT DENTIST'S
OFFICE AFTER MAN OPENS FIRE**

FOP of Ohio

Members go to D.C.

Members from Akron Lodge 7, Capital City Lodge 9, Queen City Lodge 69, Western Lake County Lodge 116, J. Darrell Birmingham Lodge 140, and Mahoning County Lodge 141 travelled to Washington D.C. to meet with our Congressional delegation.

The National FOP identified the following issues as our federal priorities for the next session of Congress.

- Public Employee - Employer Cooperation Act, introduced by Rep. Stauber (R-MN) and Rep. Budzinski (D-IL). This provides national collective bargaining rights to first responders
- Law Enforcement Officers' Equity Act. Not yet introduced but expands the definition of law enforcement officer to provide all federal officers with 6c retirement benefits
- LEOSA Reform Act. Not yet introduced but makes important upgrades to the existing law that allows active and retired officers to carry firearms across the country.
- The Protect and Serve Act HR 1551. Introduced By Rep. Rutherford (R-FL) and Rep. Gottheimer (D-DJ) and creates a new federal offense for those who deliberately target law enforcement officers with violence
- The HELPER Act. Not yet introduced but helps 1st Responders by establishing a new home loan program public servants modeled after the popular VA program.

You can read more about the NFOP legislative priorities at:

<https://fop.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Day-on-the-Hill-2025-Legislative-Materials.pdf>

FOP of Ohio at Day on the Hill



Important Social Security Update

Starting the week of February 24, 2025, the SSA will begin issuing retroactive benefit payments and increasing monthly benefits for individuals impacted by the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO).

Previously, we anticipated a 12–18-month implementation timeline, but I am pleased to report that the process has been expedited considerably!

Key Updates:

- **Retroactive Payments** – For those entitled to a back payment, a one-time deposit will be made into the bank account SSA has on file by the end of March 2025. This payment will cover the increase in benefits dating back to January 2024, the official repeal date of WEP and GPO.
- **Monthly Benefit Increases** – Beginning in April 2025, those previously impacted by WEP and GPO will see their adjusted, full benefits reflected in their Social Security payments.
- **SSA Notifications** – Any member receiving an adjustment or retroactive payment will receive an official notice from SSA explaining their updated benefits.

The SSA is processing these adjustments for over 3 million people, and while most will be automated, some cases will require manual processing due to individual complexities.

For questions, SSA has a comprehensive website with additional information, and members can call 800-772-1213 for assistance.



PRE-65 Retiree Health Insurance

We have had several emails lately about Thin Blue Line Insurance and we have seen the online messages on Facebook.

The FOP has reached out to and have had several conversations with the CEO of the company about the allegations posted online. Here is what we have been told:

- The company is not in any financial danger
- They have had staffing issues due to growth and they are also considering civil action against a former employee who they believe fraudulently used TBL's name and using social media platforms amongst other online resources to pose as TBL members stating false negative remarks that TBL is insolvent.
- They have made changes to provider access and there have been some implementation challenges.

Here is what we have done in response:

- We have had several communications with the CEO of TBL
- Spoke to the leaders of other state FOP's and the NFOP about the issues that have been brought to our attention
- We have responded to each individual concern and have worked out several problems for our members. The online issues are making it harder for TBL to respond to members because so many people are calling about general concerns due to Facebook postings, causing those with specific concerns to be drowned out.
- We have encouraged Thin Blue Line to be more communicative with our members in regard to these changes
- Had CEO speak at our Winter Board Meeting and answer questions from our Board and members and have spoken to her and other TBL representatives multiple times on behalf of our members
- Asked TBL to produce a FAQ document to help answer our members questions
- Responded to media requests about TBL and issues our members face

FOP Congratulates Jim Tressel upon his appointment as Lt. Governor

“The FOP of Ohio would like to congratulate Jim Tressel on his nomination to be the next Lieutenant Governor of Ohio. We look forward to working with Lt. Governor Tressel on making Ohio safer.”
- Jay McDonald, President of the FOP of Ohio



FOP files Amicus Brief at Ohio Supreme Court on Marsy's Law

On Feb. 11th, President McDonald attended oral arguments in “Gatehouse Media v. Columbus Police Dept. 2023-1327” where the publishers of numerous newspapers argued that law enforcement officers should not be entitled to the protections in Marsy’s Law because they volunteered to be placed in harm’s way and the voters were not smart enough to realize that the protections would be given to cops.

The FOP of Ohio and FOP Lodge 9 joined together to support the position of Columbus PD and oppose the media position.

The Ohio Supreme Court will make its decision in the coming months.

Memorial Motorcade

The FOP of Ohio holds our annual Memorial Motorcade that goes from our office in Columbus to the Ohio Peace Officers' Memorial in London. This year, we will hold it on May 8, 2025 and we ask that all agencies send a cruiser to this important event. Please arrive at 222 E. Town St. by 0915 and will depart at 1000 sharp.

The FOP of Ohio is looking to keep all of its members updated on important happenings in our organization. Is your private (non-work) email on file with the state lodge? Does your local lodge president and secretary have their contact info on file with the FOP? Are you following the FOP social media?



FOP of Ohio Law Enforcement
Torch Run Liaison Brandon
Long from Lodge 9 represented
us by carrying the Flame of Hope
in Italy as the flame makes it way
to Turin for the Special Olympics
World Winter Games

FOP of Ohio holds Zoom meetings for members

The FOP of Ohio is hosting Zoom meetings next week with each of our 11 Districts, we will be making contact with the local lodge presidents and secretaries to get them the link to join the meetings, please contact them to acquire the link. We will talk about the legislative priorities, upcoming state and national conference and other issues important to FOP of Ohio members.

Districts 7 & 8 (Cuyahoga County) March 4 - 7pm

District 5 (SW Ohio) - March 4 - 8pm

District 4 (SE Ohio) - March 5 - 7pm

District 11 (Franklin County) - March 5 - 8pm

District 6 (NW Ohio) - March 6 - 7pm

District 1 & 2 (NE Ohio) - March 6 - 8pm

District 3 (North Central Ohio) - March 10 - 7pm

District 10 (State employees) - March 11 - 6pm

District 9 (Cincinnati) - March 11 - 7pm





VS



THU | MAR 20 | 7:00PM

The Columbus Blue Jackets and National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (NLEOMF) have teamed up to offer a specially priced ticket package which includes a discounted ticket and a donation from each ticket going back to the NLEOMF!

Please visit the link below for more information.



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STARTING AT

\$46

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OR ASCULLY@BLUEJACKETS.COM WITH ANY
QUESTIONS, CONCERNS OR SPECIAL REQUESTS.

BLUEJACKETS.COM/NLEOMF

The CLEVELAND CAVALIERS *Present*

First Responder Discount Night!

Sunday, March 30th @ 3:30pm



VS.



What's Included?

- Discounted ticket link for all First Responders, families, friends
- Early Entry Warm-ups Access from 1:30pm-2:00pm



Questions? Contact: atowns@cavs.com



[DISCOUNT LINK HERE](#)

FOP of Ohio Legislative Report

Mike Weinman - Director of
Governmental Affairs



Ohio Association of Professional Fire Fighters

Jon Harvey, President



Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio

Jay McDonald, President

February 26, 2025

The Honorable Members of the Ohio Senate

Ohio Statehouse

Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Strong Opposition to Senate Bill 8 – Protecting Public Safety and Effective Labor-Management Relations

Dear Senators,

On behalf of Ohio's **firefighters, paramedics, and law enforcement officers**, we write to express our strong opposition to **Senate Bill 8**, which seeks to limit **Union Release Time** for public employees. This legislation is a direct attack on the ability of first responders to engage in **collaborative problem-solving, advocate for public safety policies, and negotiate the very agreements that keep our departments running effectively.**

Union Release Time is **not a taxpayer handout**—it is a **bargained-for benefit** that has long been negotiated in collective bargaining agreements, often **funded through leave time voluntarily donated by members**. It provides a structured way for public safety professionals to address critical workplace issues **without disrupting daily operations**, ensuring that both fire and police departments function efficiently.

It is **widely supported by Fire Chiefs and Police Chiefs across Ohio** because it allows them to manage departments **more effectively**, reduce costly disputes, and create safer working conditions that benefit both first responders and the communities they serve. The ability to maintain **strong labor-management relationships** is essential to retaining highly trained professionals and ensuring **quick, efficient emergency response when Ohioans need it most.**

Beyond harming labor-management stability, S.B. 8's restrictions on "political activity" would have **dangerous unintended consequences**. As written, this bill could **prohibit firefighters and police officers from supporting local levies** that fund **fire stations, emergency equipment, and personnel hiring**—resources that are crucial to keeping Ohio's communities safe.

For decades, Ohio's first responders have worked in good faith with local governments to develop fair, responsible agreements that serve both workers and taxpayers. Senate Bill 8 **undermines that trust and threatens the efficiency and safety of our fire and police departments.**

We urge you to **reject Senate Bill 8** and stand with the first responders who risk their lives every day to protect the people of Ohio. We welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue further and answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Jon Harvey

President, Ohio Association of Professional Fire Fighters

Jay McDonald

President, Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio

FOP of Ohio Pushes out App

We have quite a lot going on at the State Lodge. We have hit the ground running and have been working hard. One of our ongoing initiatives is to ensure that we are getting information out to the membership in as real time as possible. Several of these initiatives will be better served with your participation.

If you have not already done so, we are asking each FOP member from Ohio to please go to www.fopohio.org and create an account. This is a fairly simple process and does not take up a lot of time. Once you have your account created, please go to your Apple or Google Play Store on your phone and download the app titled "FOP Ohio":

Once you install the app and sign in, your smartphone app will be linked to the FOP of Ohio website.

Creating your account will not only allow us to send you important information on a real time basis but it also helps to solve our ongoing issue about keeping up-to-date contact information (member's email address and phone #) on file with the state lodge.

Please push this out to all of your members and encourage them to create their account. Keeping our members as informed as possible does nothing but benefit our organization."

Is your Lodge getting ready for the 2025 National FOP Conference?

It will be August 2nd through the 8th in Miami.

The Ohio FOP will be staying at the Marriott Biscayne Bay and the total room cost will be \$253.12 per night. We know that is expensive but it is on the less expensive side of the options we were presented. We have contracted for less rooms than usual, so when the time comes to book, do not wait to secure your lodging.

The event package is not out yet.

There may be NFOP elections and Constitution changes to vote on. It looks like a NFOP per capita increase will be on the floor to be decided, plus loads of other important issues to be discussed. If your local lodge can attend, they absolutely should.





LEGAL DEFENSE PLAN

Did you know that Reserve or Auxiliary Officers can obtain FOP legal defense insurance if they become FOPA members? Did you know that County agencies can use Furtherance of Justice (FOJ) funds to pay for legal defense plans for reserve or auxiliary members?

If your agency uses reserve or auxiliary officers to supplement full-time members, make sure that they know they can get this vital protection.

Also, command level law enforcement officers outside of their collective bargaining agreement should also purchase legal defense through foplegal.com to make sure that they have criminal and civil protection. They can get this coverage as FOP members at www.foplegal.com.

No cop should be on the street without a vest, a gun and legal defense!

RETIREMENT DOESN'T MEAN STEPPING AWAY FROM THE BROTHERHOOD.

**JOIN THE NATION'S LARGEST POLICE
ORGANIZATION.**



To all retired law enforcement members, we are proud to offer our concealed carry legal protection through the FOP Legal Defense Fund for only \$75 a year! You can learn more at <https://foplegal.com/>.

We also offer exclusive access to the Thin Blue Line Healthcare, amongst many other benefits of membership. You can learn more at <https://thinbluelinebenefits.com/>

If you know a retired law enforcement who is interested in joining the nation's Largest Police Organization contact Rob Hawley at rhawley@fopohio.org.



Do you know
someone who
**“BACKS THE
BLUE?”** The FOPA
is the organization
for them!

The FOPA Ohio is a civilian affiliate of the Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio, Inc. Our members are friends and families of law enforcement Officers, responsible and respected business persons, professional men and women, and citizens from all walks of life—people willing to devote a portion of their time and efforts toward assisting the various law enforcement agencies of our communities, states and nation.

The FOPA Ohio is an organization formed for the purpose of increasing our understanding of the rights, duties and problems of law enforcement officers; of fostering respect for them; and of bettering conditions under which they serve society. We accomplish this through public relations, as well as legislative and educational efforts. It is our aim and objective to support law enforcement throughout Ohio in every way possible. We believe that Law is the safeguard to freedom, and it is our duty to defend it.

We all need to help the FOPA help us, by recruiting a member or two to join the FOPA. If you need information on the FOPA, please email alodgeupdate@gmail.com



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By Anthony Thomas

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What every police officer should know
By Dr. Matthew Lounsbury

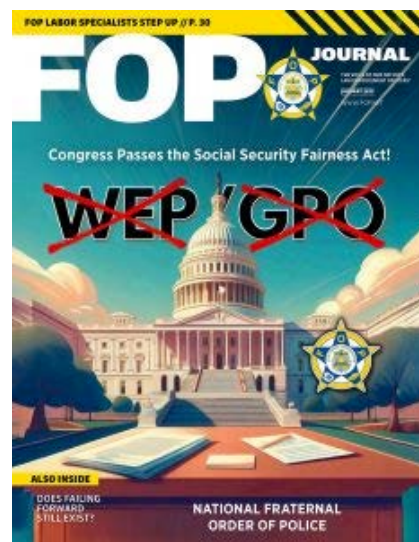
Patrol officers don't patrol
To make a work shift manageable, something's got to give
By Casey L. Stinson




**NATIONAL
POLICE CREDIT UNION**
A DIVISION OF CHICAGO PATROLMEN'S FEDERAL CREDIT UNION



**LEGAL
DEFENSE
PLAN**



FOP JOURNAL
Congress Passes the Social Security Fairness Act!
~~WEP~~ ~~GPO~~
ALSO INSIDE:
DOES FAILING FORWARD STILL EXIST?
NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE



ID Theft Assist SM
One Call. One Solution.

College AVE [®]
STUDENT LOANS

These benefits and many more can be found
at <https://fop.net/member-benefits/>

Ohio Police

Important Dates

March 13-15, 2025	NFOP Board Meeting	Salt Lake City
April 1-2, 2025	Lobby Day	Columbus
May 2-3, 2025	Ohio FOP Board Meeting	Canton
May 8, 2025	Ohio Law Enforcement Memorial	London
May 13-15, 2025	Police Week	Washington D.C.
July 13-15, 2025	Ohio FOP State Conference	Cincinnati
August 2-8, 2025	National FOP Conference	Miami

