



FOP MAKES STRONG PUSH ON BARGAINING BILL

FOP President Leads Effort to Include Our Bill on End of Year Agenda

Chuck Canterbury, National President of the Fraternal Order of Police, spent all of last week in Washington, D.C. working in tandem with the staff in the National Legislative Office in an effort to get the language of S. 1611, "Public Employee-Employer Cooperation Act," incorporated into several likely pieces of legislation that Congress will be considering before ending the session.

"We're cautiously optimistic," Canterbury said. "Congress has several bills that it must complete before concluding its business for the year. The fact is, we have a lot of bipartisan support for the bill and we've approached it in a very honest and open way. We do have a chance of getting this done."

The legislation, which was introduced by Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH) and the late Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA), would recognize the fundamental right of public safety employees to form and join unions and bargain collectively with their employers over wages, hours, and working conditions without undermining existing State collective bargaining laws. The legislation does not require binding arbitration, protects existing right-to-work laws, and specifically prohibits strikes and lockouts. The bill has attracted a lot of support in the House and Senate from both sides of the aisle.

"The FOP and our friends at the International Association of Fire Fighters have been working to pass this legislation for more than a decade," Canterbury said. "Just as we were very close last May, winning a key procedural vote, I do think we have the support we need. It's the timing."