



January is the time to set priorities and when agencies are involved in legislative sessions, either promoting bills, getting them amended/killed, or considering how to implement bills once passed.

This is also the month we want our members to consider running for NAPE office. A new board will be installed in July 2024. We will be seeking nominations in March for a new president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, regional representations, and two at-large members. Contact Christie Davidson, NAPE Executive Director, for more information and look for more details in the future.



Making Connections

We closed out 2023 with a recap of our many accomplishments. With 2024 upon us, we're eager and ready to set new priorities. As probation executives, our role in proposed, current, and amended legislation is critical to setting and meeting agency and community priorities.

Whether your state has full- or part-time legislative bodies, January is always a good time to reconnect with policy-making elected officials and gain a better understanding of their legislative priorities for the upcoming calendar year.

In addition to becoming more informed about elected officials' intentions, this connection will enhance your ability to advocate for policies, procedures, and laws that align with your agency's mission and your community's needs.

From promoting bills, supporting bills, getting bills amended or stopped, to identifying a process for implementation once bills are passed, strong relationships with legislative officials—elected, appointed, and merit—is integral to meeting agency priorities.

If you're unsure how to best navigate the legislative process and/or particularly "sensitive" legislation, read Chief April Billet's ProTip an article below and don't hesitate to reach out to your NAPE colleagues. The collective experience of our network is invaluable when it comes to policy and best practice. Additionally, the work we each do locally can and does impact national policy and practice; which, in turn, directly impacts all of our missions and outcomes.



Chief Billet and Fahrenheit,
the department's service dog

April J. Billet

Deputy District Court Administrator
Chief Probation Officer

York County Department of Probation Services, PA

*"Never miss an opportunity to engage with a legislative partner.
The more you respond or reach out, the more your partners will
know you are a reliable source of information."*

Working with Legislators

On December 14, 2023, Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro signed into legislation [Act 44 of 2023](#). This historic probation reform legislation represents years of work by many individuals and organizations to make a positive impact on the probation and parole system in Pennsylvania. It also represents the first time the County Adult Probation and Parole Officers Association of Pennsylvania (CAPPOAP) had a significant voice in the process. In prior years, the association executive director would be asked if we supported or not pending legislation. However, we were never actively engaged in the process or actively solicited for specific education and input into pending legislation. This change obviously did not occur overnight and was not easy.

The county chiefs association has made great strides in developing relationships with our stakeholders in the last five years and raising the association's professionalism. We accomplished this by engaging with and establishing positive relationships with our partners (legislators, district attorneys association, social justice organizations, defense bar, victim advocates, etc.). I offer the following tips and suggestions for working positively with legislators:

- First and foremost, always respond to any request for information. Whether the response is simple or complex, always reply. Never miss an opportunity to engage with a legislative partner. The more you respond or reach out, the more your partners will know you are a reliable resource for information.
- Be willing to listen to what the stakeholder says, even if you may not agree or support the proposed legislation. Ask their why so you truly understand the goals of the intended legislation. What is the “heart story” driving the legislation or the feeling for why change is necessary in their eyes?
- Keep an open mind and ask questions to make sure you understand what the problem is they are hoping to address.
- Support the parts of the legislation you feel will be positive and impactful and voice those.
- Where possible, provide research, statistics, or state and local outcomes that may support the changes they are seeking to make or that may give them pause to reconsider their stance.
- Offer suggestions for change that meet them halfway. This is what partnership truly is. Negotiating for change is a give-and-take process.
- Educate your stakeholders on the possible downside of any proposed legislation in a nonjudgmental way and offer possible solutions.
- When testifying before the legislature, don't just read your written testimony. Be short and direct, loud and clear when giving your testimony. Use this as an opportunity to reinforce the major points of your written testimony and provide real-life examples with an emotional pull if possible.
- And lastly, pick and choose your battles. If you can make some positive changes, consider that a victory. This will build credibility with your partners in the legislative process, and they will be more likely to reach out again with a willingness to partner.

To view the Act 44 changes, [click here](#).



Executives Talk at ACA

NAPE President Susan Burke and board members Marcus Hodges and Joe Winkler presented at the American Correctional Association (ACA) Winter Conference on *Leading Innovations in Supervision*. More than 35 people attended the session to learn about the characteristics of innovative leaders, how Florida's bike and mobile probation units grew from a staff idea to a full-blown program, and how CSOSA in Washington, D.C. turned failed strategies into successful interventions by following the research and responding to the needs and interests of people under their supervision.

ACA Executive Director Robert Green extended the invitation for NAPE to speak, representing the beginnings of a new partnership between our associations.

We invite members to share information about NAPE with other community supervision executives to help expand our network and strengthen our opportunities, data, and expertise. Affordable annual NAPE membership options are available and can be purchased/renewed at napehome.org

- Individual (recurring discount available)
- Retired
- Organizational

- Corporate

NAPE is dedicated to enhancing the professionalism and effectiveness in the field of community corrections by creating a national network for executives, bringing about positive change in the field, and making available a pool of experts in community corrections management, program development, training, and research.

Learn more: napehome.org

Contact NAPE

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