



MPPOA Washington Report

By Dennis McGrann

It has been a busy summer for Members of Congress as they move forward on a number of major issues. Both the House and the Senate continue to work on health care reform legislation, transportation reauthorization, completing the annual twelve appropriation measures by the end of the Fiscal Year, as well as addressing several important law enforcement initiatives.

Several major events have occurred over the past few months including: President Obama released his 2010 budget proposal on May 7th, 2009, the House passed the FAA Reauthorization (HR 915) on May 21st and the Climate Change Bill (HR 2454) on July 26th, and Minnesota's new Senator, Al Franken was sworn into office on July 7th.

After eight months of vote counting and courtroom haggling, Minnesota finally has a second Senator. Senator Al Franken's victory over former Republican Senator Norm Coleman gives Democrats sixty Senate seats, the critical number needed to overcome a potential filibuster. With Senator Franken sworn in, his party now has a majority not reached on either side of the aisle in roughly three decades. Senator Franken has been assigned to the Judiciary Committee, Indian Affairs Committee, and Aging Committee; he will also sit on the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee with major responsibilities for healthcare reform and pensions.

Also on the agenda, the Senate is expected to confirm Judge Sonia Sotomayor, Obama's first Supreme Court appointment, before leaving on August 7th for a recess. Judge Sotomayor has won the support of numerous nationally recognized law enforcement organizations including, the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), and the National Sheriffs Association, among others.

The President's 2010 budget proposal significantly increases funding for a number of law enforcement priorities. The proposal shows a commitment to expanding and increasing the COPS hir-

ing program, helping state and local law enforcement along the border in dealing with illegal aliens and criminals, and supporting law enforcement in its fight to protect the homeland through grant funds and expanded federal support.

On the legislative front, the House passed the fiscal year 2010 (FY2010) Homeland Security appropriations bill after lengthy debate between the Republicans and Democrats in Congress on June 24th. The bill (HR 2892), which was approved by a 389-37 vote count, would provide \$42.6 billion in FY2010 discretionary funds for the Department of Homeland Security.

The following day, June 25th, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved a FY2010 Commerce-Justice-Science (CJS) spending bill that would strengthen funding for the Justice Department and NASA and provide a considerable boost to the Census Bureau. The bill would provide

\$27.4 billion in budget authority for the Justice Department, \$1.3 billion more than FY2009 and \$311 million more than President Obama requested.

The House Fiscal Year 2010 CJS Appropriations bill (HR 2847) passed on June 18th by a vote of 259-157. The bill contains a total of \$64.4 billion, which is \$6.8 billion or 11.7% above last year's level, and \$197 million below the President's budget request. Below is a list of Minnesota projects included in the bill:

- City of Gilbert Police Department, Integrated Radio System \$35,000
- City of Minneapolis, Digital Cameras and Mobile Data Computers for Public Safety \$100,000
- Itasca County, Itasca County 9-11 Radio System \$500,000
- St Louis County Sheriff, Regional Interoperability Data System Project \$500,000
- Northeast Law Enforcement Administrators Council, Northeast Law Enforcement Administrators Council Methamphetamine Reduction Project \$500,000 Oberstar
- 9th Judicial District, Koochiching County,

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