

NASCO

National Association of Security Companies



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PRESS RELEASE

NASCO Hails Senator Pat Toomey's Introduction of the Security Officer Screening Improvement Act of 2016 (S.2534)

Legislation will expand availability of FBI checks for private security officers

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The National Association of Security Companies (NASCO), the nation's largest contract security association whose member companies employ over 400,000 security officers across the U.S., strongly commends Senator Patrick Toomey of Pennsylvania for his introduction of S. 2534, the "Security Officer Screener Improvement Act of 2016" (SOSIA).

The legislation addresses a critical gap in the criminal background screening of security officers. The bill will enable employers of security officers to obtain FBI background checks on their officers when an FBI background check is not conducted by the officer's state of employment.

Commented NASCO Chairman Jim McNulty, "When you see private security officers, they are almost always in uniform and sometimes they are armed. Moreover, they are considered persons of trust by the public. It is clearly in the public's best interest that private security officers are properly screened. It has been well documented that FBI criminal background checks uncover serious criminal convictions that do not show up in state criminal history checks or private checks. We are grateful for Senator Toomey's leadership in addressing this important public safety issue, and we look forward to working with Senator Toomey and others in Congress to pass this important piece of legislation."

In 2004, NASCO, private security companies and other security associations such as ASIS International worked with Congress to enact the Private Security Officer Employment Authorization Act (PSOEAA). The PSOEAA authorized employers of security officers, both contract and proprietary, to request FBI background checks on their officers. However, the 2004 Act required that the authorized FBI checks be done only by the states.

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Explained NASCO Executive Director Steve Amitay, "Even before the PSOEEA, states were authorized to conduct FBI background checks on classes of employees and licensees, and many states currently conduct FBI checks security officers as part of a state licensing regime. A handful of states also started making FBI checks available for security officers after the enactment of the PSOEEA. However, there are still tens of thousands of security officers for whom no state FBI checks available. This is because some states conduct no criminal background checks on security officers, others conduct only state criminal checks, others conduct only FBI checks on armed security officers, and others don't have the resources or personnel to set up a FBI check system. Also, there are only a few of states that provide for FBI checks on proprietary in-house security officers. When Congress passed the PSOEEA, the clear intent was that FBI background checks should be available for all security officers, regardless of their state of employment, and the SOSIA fulfills that intent."

Amitay continued, "The SOSIA's call for a DOJ designated entity to conduct previously authorized FBI checks for security officers is identical to what similarly situated child care and volunteer organizations are also seeking from Congress. We are hopeful these important public safety efforts will be acted upon by Congress this year."

About NASCO – The National Association of Security Companies (NASCO) is the nation's largest contract security industry association, representing private security companies that employ more than 400,000 across the United States servicing every business sector and the governmental sector. As the national leader and voice of the contract security industry, NASCO interacts with Congress, federal agencies, state legislators, regulators, the courts, and the media on industry related issues and NASCO is leading efforts to set meaningful standards for the private security industry and security officers at all levels of government.

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