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October 1, 2003

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Funds Will Bolster Security At Schools In 10 Municipalities Throughout The State

Washington, DC - Following through on his promise to improve school safety and get New Jersey its fair share of federal grants, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) today announced that ten Garden State municipalities will benefit from a total of \$531,000 in federal grants to bolster their school safety. The money comes from the second-year funding of the 'Secure Our Schools Act' - a national program that Rothman authored and got signed into law in 2000. In New Jersey, which received more than 10 percent of the national funding, the 'Secure Our Schools Act' grants will go to Burlington - \$100,000; East Orange - \$50,000; Elizabeth - \$25,000; Harrison - \$21,000; Little Ferry - \$40,000; Neptune - \$20,000; Passaic - \$165,000; Prospect Park - \$45,000; Roselle - \$15,000; and Secaucus - \$50,000.

"By bringing \$531,000 in federal funds back to New Jersey, we are making real, tangible progress in our effort to prevent school violence throughout our state. I am delighted that I was able to get this program enacted into law and then to deliver critical dollars for the people of my state," said Rothman, the father of two New Jersey public schoolchildren.

Rothman has worked across party lines as a member of the House Appropriations Committee, to secure \$5 million in each of the past two years for funding of his national program. Last year, the program distributed \$615,000 to six New Jersey municipalities, bringing the two year total to \$1.15 million for the Garden State. Rothman is currently working to expand the 'Secure Our Schools Act' with significantly more funding. The 'Secure Our Schools Act' is a voluntary, matching program that calls for the federal government to pay for 50 percent of the security measures, with the state or local government covering the remainder of the cost. Municipalities that can demonstrate financial need can receive 100 percent of the security costs.

"The 'Secure Our Schools Act' provides municipalities with federal funds they need to help implement school security measures, such as metal detectors," Rothman said. "This will allow students to focus on their studies without having to look over their shoulders worrying that they are in danger. Additionally, New Jerseyans pay a disproportionate share of federal taxes along with high state and local taxes, so these federal dollars will help reduce some of the burden on property taxpayers throughout the state."

Municipalities or school districts interested in applying for grants next year should contact Brendan Gill in Rothman's Hackensack office at 201-646-0808.

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