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Washington, DC - Continuing his work to improve school safety in direct response to concerns from students and their parents, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) today announced \$590,620 in federal grants for local schools to have full-time police officers on patrol. Garfield was awarded \$465,620 to hire four full-time police officers, while Lyndhurst received a \$125,000 grant to hire a full-time officer.

"This grant means that the children of Garfield and Lyndhurst, as well as their parents and teachers, will have the comfort of knowing that their school is protected by police officers who will help keep them safe," said Rothman. "We need to take all of the necessary precautions to prevent any kind of school violence. Having police officers permanently assigned to schools will greatly improve the safety of all students, while at the same time provide them with positive role models."

"We are very proud of Congressman Rothman and are very grateful for him helping to obtain this grant," said Lyndhurst Mayor James Guida. "There is a definite need for the COPS In Schools program and these funds will go to good use. We already have an officer in our high school and it has proven to be a very effective program. The funds come at a critical time and we look forward to putting them to good use."

Under the terms of the award, the police officers will work with students, teachers, and parents to improve school security, counsel troubled youth, mediate conflicts before they erupt into violence, and help prevent drug use. Additionally, it is expected that the officers' mere presence will deter criminal activity at the school.

"School should be a safe-haven for our children, where they go to learn without having to look over their shoulder fearing that they may be in danger," Rothman said. "A key component of preventing school violence is having someone who students can feel comfortable confiding in when they learn of a classmate carrying a weapon or planning a fight. These officers will be the ones who students feel comfortable with in their school."

Rothman has a strong history of working to curb school violence. In response to concerns from students, parents, and teachers, Rothman authored and developed the "Secure Our Schools Act," which allows school districts to apply for federal grants to install metal detectors, locks, improved lighting, and other deterrent

measures that keep students safe. Congress has approved \$10 million for the program over the past two years. Last year, six New Jersey municipalities received "Secure Our School" grants totaling \$615,000 as part of the program's first-ever funding.

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