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Grants Awarded Under Legislation Co-Sponsored By Rothman

Washington, DC -- Rep. Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) announced today that New Milford and Wallington will receive Community Oriented Policing Service (COPS) grants under the COPS in Schools Program. Rothman co-sponsored the legislation that created the COPS in Schools Program when he served as a member of the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Crime.

The grants will provide \$375,000 for New Milford to hire three officers and \$250,000 for Wallington to hire two officers. "Today's grants help ensure that our children attend schools that are as safe as they can possibly be," Rothman said. "Having police officers who are positive role models inside our schools is an effective way to provide guidance and security to our kids. These police officers are not just there to guard, but to listen."

New Milford and Wallington applied for the COPS grants in order to provide their schools with community police officers. These police officers will work with students, teachers and parents to improve school security, to counsel troubled youth, and to mediate conflicts before they erupt into violence. By placing school resource officers in and around elementary and secondary schools, this program combats school-related crime and disorder problems, gangs, and drug activities.

"This grant announcement is another great day for the people of New Milford," New Milford Mayor Frank DeBari said. "It comes at a perfect time when the New Milford school system is awaiting a referendum for building additions and renovations to our two grammar schools to expand our educational process."

"This grant allows us to extend community policing from the streets to our classrooms," DeBari added. "We didn't apply for this grant based on violence in our schools. We want to perform proactive- rather than reactive- teaching to our students about drugs, violence, peer pressure, safety and the rest of the day to day events that happen in our lives but most of all, in our children's lives."

"We are excited that Congressman Rothman got this grant to make our schools safer," Wallington Mayor Walter Wargacki said. "We already have the logistics worked out with the schools how best to employ these officers and I believe they'll make a difference."

Grants under this program provide up to \$125,000 to pay for the salary and benefits of each new officer over three years. Since the COPS in Schools Program began in 1998, it has provided \$420 million to fund more than 3,800 officers.

"I am pleased to have helped create this program that has had so many wonderful successes across the nation," Rothman said.

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