

## Rothman, Lautenberg, and Menendez Secure \$ 3.2 Million for HUMC

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Pictured (L-R): HUMC Vice President & COO Bob Torre, Rep. Rothman, Sen. Lautenberg, HUMC President & CEO John P. Ferguson, and Dr. Joseph Feldman.

Money will fund the first-ever mobile hospital for use in responding to bioterror attacks and other mass casualty incidents in urban areas.

(Hackensack, NJ)—Today, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ) announced that he and his Senate colleagues secured \$3.2 million in federal funding for Hackensack University Medical Center (HUMC) over the past two years. Thanks to this funding, HUMC will develop the first-ever mobile hospital built to respond to bioterrorism and mass casualty incidents in urban areas. Current technology primarily supports rapid medical responses in wide open areas, which are not likely terrorist targets.

"Believe it or not, the United States actually does not have a [self-contained] mobile care unit well-equipped for use on the densely populated and narrow streets of its cities. If, God forbid, another terrorist attack should occur in our area, Northern New Jersey and New York must have the best emergency medical equipment on hand," said Rothman. "That's why I considered it my duty to secure \$3.2 million dollars for this project."

"When there's an emergency, time is everything. We've got to get critical care to the scene quickly and be equipped to provide an array of services on-site. In the event of another disaster, equipment like this mobile surgical unit can provide those services and reduce loss of life," Senator Frank R. Lautenberg said. "I was pleased to secure funding in the Senate for this initiative and, with my new seat on the Appropriations Committee, look forward to bringing more money home to keep New Jerseyans safe."

Currently, a mobile rapid response care unit known as the "Carolina Med1" is used by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to respond to mass casualty incidents. However, it is the size of a tractor trailer, making it ill-suited for use on the narrow, tightly-packed streets of a city. It is also difficult to maneuver around the type of debris usually left by large-scale disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina and the attacks of 9/11.

"Can you imagine getting one or two tractor trailers across the George Washington Bridge during rush hour, in the middle of a catastrophe, with debris and people scattered everywhere?" added Rothman. "It would be virtually impossible, making this life-saving system unavailable to help our people in times of dire need."

"We are grateful to Congressman Rothman as well as Senators Menendez and Lautenberg for spearheading efforts that will protect northern New Jersey, the entire metropolitan New York area, and any other geographic area that may benefit from the need of urgent emergency care provided in an unprecedented comprehensive manner through a mobile hospital," said Joseph Feldman, M.D., FACEP, chairman of the Emergency/Trauma Department at HUMC. "As a national leader in healthcare, we are proud to be part of this unique opportunity to provide emergency care to victims of tragedies and disasters."

The Hackensack University Medical Center Model will have three key pieces that can either fit together as a full-service hospital or work independently in different areas as needed. The first part will be a mobile trauma department about the size of a FedEx truck with expandable walls. The design will allow it to break down on the go and spread out for treatment. A second supporting vehicle will house lab equipment that can analyze powders and detect deadly biological agents such as anthrax on the spot. The third installment is a mobile operating room.

In addition to housing medical equipment, the vehicles will come with communications equipment that enables the medical team to coordinate its work. HUMC expects the first part of the project will be ready for testing by early summer 2007.

Rothman is a member of the House Appropriations Committee, which makes decisions about all federal spending. Through his efforts, and those of his Senate colleagues, HUMC received \$1.2 million in the FY2006 Defense Appropriations Bill and \$2 million in the FY2007 Defense Appropriations Bill. Thanks to their work, this \$3,200,000 will not come out of local property taxpayers' pockets.

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