

Congress Renews Rothman's "Secure Our Schools" Program

Congressman

NEWS RELEASE

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CONGRESS RENEWS ROTHMAN'S 'SECURE OUR SCHOOLS' PROGRAM

--President Bush To Sign Bill Into Law Extending Program Through 2009--

(Washington, DC) - Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ) is pleased to announce that Congress passed a bill extending his important and highly successful 'Secure Our Schools' program through 2009. The extension was included as part of H.R. 3402, the Department of Justice Appropriations Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 2006 through 2009, which both the House and Senate passed unanimously. Rothman's 'Secure Our Schools' program will continue to be run through the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, or COPS.

"I am grateful to my colleagues in Congress for recognizing the continuing need for this important program and extending it for another four years," Rothman stated. "Secure Our Schools is a school security matching grant program that I created in 2000 while serving on the House Judiciary Committee. The then Judiciary Committee Chairman Henry Hyde (R-IL) and current Judiciary Committee Chairman James Sensenbrenner (R-WI) have been extremely helpful in attaining this extension of the program and I thank them for their cooperation, hard work, and willingness to reach across party lines."

"To date, I have helped secure a total of \$50 million through the Appropriations process for this important school safety program. These funds have been used to improve security in over 920 schools across the country. 59 New Jersey schools have been helped with \$4.6 million dollars in federal grants. In Fiscal Year 2005 alone, New Jersey schools will have received \$2.5 million for security equipment and training to keep weapons out of their schools. Unfortunately, we live in a society in which a program like Secure Our Schools is necessary. Too many of our school children have to attend school worrying that they may be subject to some sort of violence. I continue in my commitment to this vitally important program so that our children can go to school and concentrate on learning, instead of constantly looking over their shoulders in fear, worrying if a gun or knife has been brought into their school which will be used against them."

The Secure Our Schools Act, authored by Rothman, is a voluntary, matching grant program that affords municipalities the opportunity to apply for federal funding for school safety grants. The grants can be used for metal detectors, locks, improved lighting, other deterrent measures, school security assessments, and security training for students and personnel. The federal government pays for 50 percent of the cost of the security measures, with the state or local government covering the remainder of the cost. If a school cannot meet the matching requirement due to a lack of funds, it can be considered for a 100% grant.

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