

Rothman Secures \$ 1 Million In Federal Funds To Bolster New Jersey DMV Security

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To Bolster New Jersey DMV Security

Works With Acting Transportation Commissioner Lettiere &

DMV Director Legreide To Install Security Cameras At All Branch Offices

Trenton, NJ — Following through on his pledge to help improve security and crack down on identity theft and fraud at New Jersey's 45 Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) branch offices, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) today announced that he has secured \$1 million in federal funds to help the state install security cameras at each DMV office. Rothman announced the funds, which are part of the final Fiscal Year 2003 spending measure that was just signed into law, at a press conference in the Trenton Statehouse with Acting New Jersey Transportation Commissioner Jack Lettiere and DMV Director Diane Legreide.

"Law enforcement recognizes that security cameras are an effective crime deterrent and investigative aid, which is why banks, ATM machines, and many government offices handling sensitive material have them. Now New Jersey's DMV offices will have them as well," Rothman said. "I am grateful that Congress was responsive to my call for federal funds for New Jersey's DMV after recognizing the national importance of ending identity theft and fraud. After September 11, the U.S. government must view the sale of a fake ID as a potential national security threat because the buyer could be a terrorist who would use that driver's license to gain access to some means of delivering an attack."

Rothman, who sits on the House Appropriations Committee, noted that DMV matters are typically left to the states. But because of the national security aspect of the matter, he was able to convince his colleagues in Congress to approve the funds. The Fix DMV Commission, which was ordered by Governor James E. McGreevey to overhaul the state's DMV operation, reported that surveillance cameras would serve as an important component of cracking down on theft and fraud. The \$1 million that Rothman secured for the security cameras will expedite the DMV's plans to install security cameras at each branch office by covering roughly half the cost necessary to equip every New Jersey DMV office. In addition to being used to view what is occurring at any given real time moment, the cameras will be able to record footage 24 hours a day.

"I am grateful to Congressman Rothman for his part in obtaining this substantial sum for the DMV," said Lettiere. "These funds will enable us to implement significant aspects of the Fix DMV initiative and help ensure that DMV agencies are safe and free from crime and corruption."

During a statewide crackdown on crime at DMV branches, 80 people throughout the state, including 14 DMV

employees, have been arrested in connection with counterfeit schemes. State officials have also fired more than 50 DMV employees in an effort to rid the branch offices of corruption and incompetency, including all office workers at the Frelinghuysen Avenue branch office in Newark. The new cameras will monitor both customers and employees.

house"The Division of Motor Vehicles occupies part of the frontline in our Homeland Security efforts," said Legreide. "It has been a priority of DMV to address the security breaches at our agencies and to implement a zero-tolerance policy on fraudulent and criminal activity by employees and customers. We have recently completed mandatory criminal background checks of agency employees and now, thanks to the help of Congressman Rothman, we will be able to address the security of the facility in which they work."

houseRothman added, "In addition to improving our security, which is clearly our primary goal, these federal funds will relieve New Jersey taxpayers of \$1 million toward the cost of upgrading the physical security at state DMV offices."

houseThe DMV money was included in the final spending bill for Fiscal Year 2003 that President Bush signed into law on February 20. On February 13, the House approved the measure by a margin of 338-83 and the Senate approved it by a margin of 76-20.

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