

MAYOR TESTA ANNOUNCES \$1 MILLION GRANT TO HIRE POLICE

Funding will enable hiring of three additional officers at no cost to the City for three years.

For Immediate Release:
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Mayor John G. Testa has announced that the City of Peekskill has received a commitment of state funds of \$1 million to hire three additional police officers in the City of Peekskill.

Governor Pataki was pleased to inform Mayor Testa of the funding. "I am confident this new additional funding will help you do even more to protect the City of Peekskill and build on your already impressive record of progress," stated Governor Pataki.

In December of 2004 the majority of the Common Council voted to reduce the proposed tax increase by 59% while also hiring two police officers to fill vacant positions. At that time Mayor Testa expressed his desire and commitment to locate funding to hire additional officers. "I have worked hard to support our police force while also keeping the fiscal realities in perspective," said Testa. "We can now add to our crime fighting force without any extra burden to the taxpayers of Peekskill," Testa added.

Testa points to the effectiveness of the present force by the fact of a steady drop in the overall crime rate over the last three years. The latest crime stats for 2005 show an impressive drop in Part 1 crimes by 28% and an overall decline of 5.6%. If this continues over the next two months it will assure a fourth straight year of crime reduction in Peekskill.

Governor Pataki was pleased to inform Mayor Testa of the funding. "For three consecutive years, crime in Peekskill has dropped and I am confident this new funding will help Mayor Testa and the City to continue to protect the people of Peekskill and reduce crime even further," Governor Pataki said.

Governor Pataki knows the importance of both crime reduction and fiscal management. "As a former mayor, I know how important it is to provide the services residents need, such as a strong police force, while keeping overall costs down and taxes in check. The fact that the

City has been able to maintain a strong police force and reduce crime, while remaining fiscally responsible is a credit to Mayor Testa's leadership and creative thinking," Governor Pataki added.

"These additional officers will lead to less overtime costs, increased effectiveness of the force and enable us to further our recent initiatives with the Drug Enforcement Task Force and Community Policing Unit," said Testa. "We will continue to make Peekskill one of the safest communities in Westchester and improve the quality of life of all who live here," Testa added.

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