

News From New York's 19th Congressional District

Sue Kelly

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Kelly, Oros, Testa Renew Call Against Proposed Federal Cuts to CDBG Program

Nearly \$6 Million in CDBG Funding Headed to Westchester County, Officials Announce

PEEKSKILL - U.S. Congresswoman Sue Kelly, Westchester County Legislator George Oros, and Peekskill Mayor John Testa announced today that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) will be providing Westchester County \$5.9 million in federal funds through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

At the same time, they renewed their call for Congress to protect CDBG funds in the coming year's federal budget and reject a Presidential proposal to cut funding for the program.

"Community Development Block Grants help fund community improvements and economic development projects throughout the Hudson Valley," Kelly said. "CDBG is a successful and proven program that effectively helps our local communities and the local economy, and Washington needs to continue supporting it and funding it accordingly."

Kelly and a coalition of both Republican and Democrat lawmakers in the House of Representatives have been fighting against proposed CDBG funding reductions by President Bush in his FY2007 federal budget proposal to Congress. Last year, Kelly and other members of the House Financial Services Committee successfully fought against a Bush Administration proposal to completely eliminate the CDBG program.

"If we didn't stand up and oppose those cuts then, we wouldn't have this \$6 million in funding coming here now," Kelly said. "We need to continue fighting in Washington to protect future CDBG funding for local communities."

This year, Kelly has been pressuring House leaders to oppose the more than 33 percent cut proposed by the Administration to the Community Development Block Grant Fund. Kelly noted that, last week, Congress restored the CDBG funding that the President cut in his FY07 budget proposal. CDBG funding will be receiving a slight increase over last year's funding level in the *Transportation, Treasury and HUD Appropriations bill*.

"As this budget legislation moves through Congress during the rest of this year, I'll continue fighting to protect this CDBG funding for our Hudson Valley communities," Kelly said. "CDBG money has helped improve our local communities time and time again. This is an effective use of federal money. This is funding that comes back here to the Hudson Valley, from Washington, to help make necessary local improvements so they don't have to be offset with increases in local taxes."

Oros said, "Congresswoman Kelly has long recognized the importance of CDBG funding for communities in our county. During the last attempt to cut these funds, she organized all the stakeholders including an invitation to the County Executive and me to testify before Congress on the value of these funds."

"Peekskill averages over \$500,000 a year in CDBG funding and has utilized almost \$3 million over the last four years," said Mayor Testa. "Because of CDBG funds we have been able to make improvements throughout the community that otherwise would not be possible. Congresswoman Kelly deserves our thanks for fighting for us in Washington to keep the CDBG program in place," added