



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

Seward Delivers Funding for Schoharie County Public Safety

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COBLESKILL, 04/02/18 -- State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta) announced today that the recently adopted 2018-19 New York State budget includes, at his insistence, \$100,000 for the Village of Cobleskill to help offset public safety costs generated due to being a SUNY host community and \$120,000 to purchase emergency pagers for fire departments throughout Schoharie County.

“Protecting the public is the top responsibility of every elected official,” said Senator Seward.

“The special state budget funding for the Village of Cobleskill and Schoharie County will help fulfill

that responsibility and keep people safe.”

The \$100,000 award – SUNY Impact Aid – for the Village of Cobleskill helps offset public safety costs related to hosting a SUNY campus. Senator Seward sponsors legislation (S.3967) that would distribute state aid annually to all municipalities hosting four-year SUNY schools to help fund police and emergency response expenses.

“Our SUNY schools are terrific assets – educating our future leaders, and helping drive the local economy. However, there is a financial trade-off that goes overlooked and local taxpayers should not be left holding the bag. The SUNY Impact Aid funding is genuine mandate relief,” Seward added.

Village of Cobleskill Mayor Linda Holmes said, “Senator Seward recognizes the need to balance the positive traits of hosting a SUNY school with the added public safety costs. The special state budget award he secured is real relief for the Village of Cobleskill and our taxpayers.”

The \$120,000 award for Schoharie County will be used to purchase high bandwidth pagers for all seventeen of the county’s fire departments.

“Communication is critical when it comes to emergency response. Over the years, more sophisticated, improved communication systems have been developed, but there is a cost involved that many small, volunteer departments just can’t afford. This state grant ensures that when firefighters are needed, the call will get to them, without depleting local resources,” Seward said.

President of the Schoharie County Fire Chiefs Association Bill Bivona said, “When an emergency call comes in it is imperative that we get word to our members quickly and accurately. Our upgraded radio system is a plus, but the associated equipment costs are a real burden for departments that are already strapped for cash. Senator Seward’s steadfast support of our departments is greatly appreciated.”

“Both of these grants fulfill key public protection needs. Even better, they deliver real mandate relief and help keep local property taxes in check,” Seward concluded.