



New Jersey Office of Homeland Security & Preparedness **NEWS**

Jon S. Corzine, *Governor*

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State Awards Homeland Security Grants to Enhance Information Sharing Capabilities

-Funds further state's commitment to address needs of law enforcement in two key counties-

HAMILTON — New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (OHSP) Director Richard L. Cañas announced today that Ocean and Union Counties have each been awarded \$150,000 in state homeland security funds to upgrade their information sharing practices and records management systems. Information sharing among and between multiple law enforcement agencies was a key recommendation of the 9/11 Commission and continues to be a major priority for New Jersey.

Cañas said both Ocean and Union counties will use the funds to create county-wide records management systems that will link all of the municipal law enforcement agencies in their counties to a central hub housed at each county prosecutor's office. These county wide systems will then connect to the New Jersey Data Exchange, commonly referred to as "NJDEX." Ocean and Union counties are the latest counties to be awarded funding to establish connectivity to NJDEX. Cañas said in the last year OHSP has awarded grants to six other counties to enable linkage to the NJDEX system.

"Investing state dollars for public safety and homeland security upgrades will continue to be top priorities for my administration," Governor Jon Corzine said. "Using state funds, which are added to the federal funds we are awarded each year, greatly enhances the capabilities of our courageous and dedicated law enforcement officers throughout the state."

According to the U.S. Census Bureau 2008 Population Estimates, Ocean County is the state's sixth most populous county with nearly 570,000 residents and Union County is the state's seventh most populous county with almost 525,000 residents. Nearly 1.1 million New Jersey residents live in these two counties. There are 33 municipalities located in Ocean County and 21 municipalities located in Union County. Both counties present significant risks and challenges to state and local law enforcement officials because of their high population density, geographic location, proximity to critical infrastructure sites and concentration of urban areas.

"Ocean and Union counties remain high priority areas in the state's overall homeland security strategy," Cañas said. "I am grateful to the Governor and the Legislature for making these funds available, which are used strategically to buy down risks and to improve prevention, response and recovery efforts in every part of the state."



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Cañas said that since the creation of the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness in 2006, Ocean and Union counties have been awarded a total of nearly \$7.2 million in direct federal homeland security funds. The funds go directly to each county to support county identified initiatives and improvements to law enforcement and emergency preparedness activities at the local level. Since 2006, Ocean County has received more than \$2.5 million in funding and Union County has received more than \$4.5 million.

"Law enforcement in Ocean County is committed to the concept of intelligence based policing and the real time sharing of crime related information among law enforcement jurisdictions," said Ocean County Prosecutor Marlene Lynch Ford. "This grant will be used to enhance our technological capabilities by linking our data bases to those in local police departments. The immediate access to crime data and information will have an appreciable and positive impact on the ability of law enforcement to protect and serve the general public."

"NJDEX will ensure that local police departments will be able to share their information with other municipalities across the state," said Union County Prosecutor Theodore J. Romankow. "This system will be a tremendous benefit for law enforcement and yet another blow to criminals in the state."

Governor Corzine created the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness after taking office in 2006. OHSP is responsible for leading the state's counter-terrorism and preparedness efforts. OHSP oversees and distributes discretionary state and federal homeland security and preparedness funds on behalf of the State of New Jersey. More information about the office can be found at www.njhomelandsecurity.gov.

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