



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Senate Bill Would Grant "Peace Officer" Status To Schoharie County Tac-Force Members

JAMES L. SEWARD June 16, 2014

| ISSUE: **LOCAL GOVERNMENT**



**ALBANY, 06/16/14** – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I- Oneonta) today announced senate approval of a bill he sponsors granting peace officer status to officers and members of the Schoharie County Sheriff's Tactical and Rescue Force. Senator Seward's bill ([S.7720](#)) was the result of a dialogue between the Schoharie County Sheriff, the Tac-Force, and Schoharie County's legislative team.

**“The Schoharie County Tac-Force is a critical component of the sheriff’s department, filling voids and providing support in a host of situations,”** said Senator Seward. **“The men and women who make up this specialized unit are highly trained and help meet emergency preparedness needs.”**

Currently, Schoharie County Tac-Force members are only officially defined as “peace officers” when preparing for or responding to an emergency situation. Senator Seward’s legislation will provide them with peace officer status while working at public festivities, parades, fairs, and other similar events, “pursuant to their special duties.”

**“The Schoharie County Sheriff’s Department relies on the Tac-Force to provide essential services, and to keep taxpayer costs in check. Elevating Tac-Force members to full peace officer status is an appropriate action and fits with the duties and responsibilities these men and women already perform on a regular basis,”** Senator Seward added.

The Schoharie County Sheriff’s Tactical and Rescue Force (Tac-Force) is a volunteer component of the sheriff’s department which provides security during public events, crowd control, search and rescue, traffic control, and assistance to road patrol deputies when needed.

Senator Seward has been a consistent supporter of the Schoharie County Tac-Force, securing a \$25,000 state grant for the unit in 2013 to help purchase communications equipment, bullet proof vests, and uniforms.

Companion legislation (A.9842A) sponsored by Assemblyman Pete Lopez has been introduced in the state assembly.