



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo secures \$80,000 in funding to help fight crime in City of Rome

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO February 27, 2017

| ISSUE: **PUBLIC SAFETY, POLICE, LAW ENFORCEMENT**



ROME – State Senator Joseph Griffo on Monday announced more than \$80,000 in state funding he has secured to enhance the Rome Police Department's ability to fight crime, including the addition of a new K-9 Unit.

Joined by Rome Mayor Jacqueline Izzo, Rome Police Chief Kevin Beach and Rome Public Safety Commissioner Frank Retrosi at Rome City Hall this morning, Senator Griffo discussed how this funding will help improve the department's ability to ensure public safety.

Senator Griffo and Mayor Izzo also introduced SPOCK, the newest addition to the department's K-9 Unit, with his handler Patrolman Michael Uhl.

Senator Joseph Griffo (R-Rome) said: "The Rome Police Department is an extraordinary agency, and as a former Mayor of Rome I know firsthand how dedicated each of them is to protecting the public. When I have the opportunity now as a state representative to advocate on behalf of the brave men and women of law enforcement in my district, I am always glad to do whatever I can to support the Rome Police Department with resources that will help them do their job to fight crime and keep the city safe."

The total funding secured by Senator Griffo is \$80,614, and includes the following:

- **K-9 Purchase and Training:** **\$14,000**
- **K-9 Vehicle and Equipment:** **\$40,000**

After the Rome Police Department recently retired one of its K-9 units, the department has used funding secured by Senator Griffo to invest in training a new K-9 unit to ensure that this crime-fighting asset remains in full-force. The latest K-9, SPOCK – a Belgian Malinois from Holland named for its pointy ears – has been assigned to Patrolman Michael Uhl as they join the department's other K-9, UKI. In the K-9 Unit led by Lt. Dominic Corigliano, SPOCK will be used for detecting drugs, as well as for building and area searches, tracking suspects and missing persons, crowd control and handler protection. This funding also been used to purchase a new Ford Explorer SUV that is better equipped to safely handle a K-9 unit.

- **Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Training: \$5,614**

Sexual assault, rape and domestic violence incidents are among the most serious crimes law enforcement can face, and this funding was integral in providing specialized training for several members of the Rome Police Department. With this training, these officers have been given additional guidance in how to approach crimes of sexual assault and domestic violence, particularly concerning interactions with the victims. Such victims have already experienced a traumatic event, so this training will help officers avoid further traumatizing a victim while speaking with them about what happened.

- **License Plate Reader (LPR): \$21,000**

By automatically scanning the license plates of moving or parked vehicles, this popular and effective law enforcement tool allows the Rome Police Department to more efficiently locate vehicles that are either stolen; wanted in connection with a crime or an Amber Alert involving a missing child; or driven by someone with a suspended license or registration, or a warrant for their arrest. In addition to locating vehicles, the latest LPR purchased with this funding also offers a number of advanced options to assist authorities with investigations.

Rome Mayor Jacqueline M. Izzo said: “We would like to sincerely thank Senator Griffo for his help in securing much needed funding for the Rome Police Department. Our K-9 unit is extremely important in assisting our officers on investigations, and we welcome SPOCK. Our department takes the issue of domestic violence very seriously, and training is a must. It would not have been possible without this funding. The license plate reader is an essential crime-fighting tool allowing officers the ability to quickly ascertain whether someone has an outstanding warrant, expired license or stolen vehicle.”

Rome Police Chief Kevin Beach: “I would like to thank Senator Griffo for his continued support of the Rome Police Department and law enforcement as a whole. The Senator cares about Rome and wants our department to be equipped with all of the necessary tools and training to maintain a safe community. This funding was used to purchase items that will greatly assist our department in providing the highest quality services to our citizens. We are fortunate to have representation in Albany that knows the needs of smaller communities such as ours.”

Rome Public Safety Commissioner Frank Retrosi: “The officers of the Rome Police Department and I are very grateful for Senator Griffo’s efforts in securing the funding necessary for sexual assault training, our newest K-9 SPOCK and a specialized K-9 vehicle, as well as our very valuable License Plate Reader. Without the Senator’s efforts to secure this funding in Albany, our ability to function as a modern law enforcement agency would be hindered. All of these ‘tools’ are necessities, and to have Senator Griffo in ‘our corner’ is a big plus for the City of Rome.”

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