



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jen Metzger

## Senator Metzger Applauds Emergency Communication Funding Awarded to Delaware, Orange, Sullivan and Ulster Counties

JEN METZGER January 6, 2020

| ISSUE: **STATEWIDE INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS GRANT PROGRAM**

**Mid-Hudson Valley and Catskills, NY...**All four counties in New York State Senate District 42 received funding from the **Statewide Interoperable Communications Grant program**, enabling their respective local governments to expand emergency response capabilities and enhance overall public safety operations.

Funds can be used for a variety of functions, including expanding radio coverage by installing new equipment at towers and antenna sites, implementing Next Generation 9-1-1 technologies and standards, setting up communication channels among public safety radio systems, supporting the operations of public safety dispatch centers, and deploying new technologies that help counties link their systems together.

“This funding will go to vital emergency services communications that our more rural counties need to be able to improve emergency response times and keep our communities safe,” **said Senator Metzger (SD-42)**. “Creating a stronger communications infrastructure will allow our providers to respond more rapidly and be better equipped to handle emergency situations. I am grateful these counties received this much-deserved funding.”

The Statewide Interoperable Communications Grant, which is formula-based and funded by cellular surcharge revenue, allows counties to make vital improvements to systems that first responders use to communicate between one another and different regions of the state, such as land mobile radio systems. This year's SD-42 allocations are as follows:

- **Delaware County: \$460,776**
- **Orange County: \$822,055**
- **Sullivan County: \$649,285**
- **Ulster County: \$563,271**

In Orange County, "the grant is specifically targeted for building out and maintaining a county-wide emergency communications radio system," said Brendan R. Casey, Department of Emergency Services Commissioner of Orange County. After recently completing their new Orange CORE Net system that includes fourteen tower sites and brand new radio equipment for all law enforcement, Fire, and EMS personnel, the county will use about \$500 thousand for yearly tower leases and high speed fiber costs to support the system.

Administered by the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, the Statewide Interoperable Communications Grant program has awarded more than \$500 million to 57 counties and New York City since 2010. After doubling Sullivan County's radio towers from the funding over that period, Sullivan intends on using this year's grant to maintain their radio system and enhance dead zones that are a direct result of the area's challenging typography.

In Ulster County, the funding will upgrade law enforcement (Common 911 Police Frequency), fire and EMS radio communications to a VHF High Band Simulcast System, providing

interoperability within the same spectrum for first responders. “Also included in the upgrade (but not limited to) is new radio console equipment, subscriber units, [a] NG911 phone system, logging recorder, additional tower sites, and the installation of the National Interoperable Channels at multiple sites,” **said Steven J. Peterson, Ulster County Emergency Services Director.** “Ulster County's full award of \$563,271 will be used to fund a portion of this capital project.”