



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

## Harckham Announces Three Counties in SD40 to Receive State Grant Funding for Emergency Communications

PETE HARCKHAM June 16, 2021

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*Peekskill, NY* – New York State Senator Pete Harckham announced today that the three counties in Senate District 40—Dutchess, Putnam and Westchester—will receive aid from the state to support emergency response services. Administered by the state Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, the grants will allow the counties to make improvements to their 9-1-1 response and emergency dispatch operations.

The grant funding totals are Dutchess—\$159,510; Putnam—\$93,237; and Westchester—\$136,422. All told, New York State awarded \$10 million in aid to its 57 counties and New York City for emergency communications improvements.

“There is no time to lose when there is an emergency, so it is important that we continue to make upgrades with state-of-the-art technology to our municipal communications systems,’ said Harckham. “This new funding will help our first responders handle calls more readily and dispatch necessary assistance faster. Also, the additional funding from the state for these infrastructure enhancements lessens costs for municipalities and taxpayers.”

In New York, counties provide the majority of 9-1-1 answering and dispatching operations, coordinating these services among municipal, county and state responders. Public safety facilities, sometimes referred to as public safety answering points, receive incoming calls for help and initiate dispatching of emergency services.

These grant awards allow for state reimbursement to counties for eligible public safety call-taking and dispatching expenses. All counties and New York City can apply to receive grant funds, and all chose to participate in the program this year.

The emergency communications funding not only helps county operators offset their day-to-day expenses but can also foster upgrades in call-taking and dispatching technology while investing in new services such as text-to-9-1-1 messaging, data communication and improved geo-location for emergency response.

New York State has distributed more than \$60 million in the past seven years to help municipalities with their public answering point capabilities, according to Patrick A. Murphy, Commissioner of the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services.