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NJASRO Praises NJ Legislature for Safe Schools Resource Officer Training Law--Offers Support

Development of Statewide Training Courses and Curriculum to Make NJ Schools Safer

March 17, 2006, Trenton, NJ --- The New Jersey Association of School Resource Officers (NJASRO), the state's leading organization of school resource and school safety officials, met with NJ Senate President Richard Codey to applaud the New Jersey State Legislature for passing the *Safe Schools Resource Officer Training Law*, and offer their support in its implementation. The law requires the Police Training Commission, in consultation with the Attorney General, to develop and offer training courses for all new school resource officers and school liaisons to law enforcement in New Jersey. The courses will provide comprehensive and consistent training in current school resource officer practices and concepts.

"New Jersey's most valuable resource is its children," said John Morella, NJASRO President. "This bill will further provide valuable training to officers on how to teach and protect our students. We applaud the outstanding work the legislature has done to make schools safer, and offer our support to the Police Training Commission and the Attorney General's office to develop an effective training program for future safe school resource officers and school liaisons across New Jersey."

The law was authored and introduced by Assemblywoman Joan Voss of Bergen County in the Assembly, and sponsored by Sen. Fred Madden in the Senate. The bill passed the Assembly 74-2 and the Senate 38-0 and was signed into law by Sen. Codey while he served as Acting Governor on Jan. 6.

"By virtue of their daily interaction with pupils, school resource officers invariably make a strong, early impression of the institution of law enforcement," said Assemblywoman Voss, a former teacher at Fort Lee High School. "The job of a school resource officer involves great responsibility and highly specialized skills; and the State should provide comprehensive and consistent training for those individuals entrusted with these responsibilities."

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Sen. Madden added, “The development of a training course for safe schools resource officers and public school liaisons to law enforcement ensures that our schools can continue providing a secure environment for children and staff.”

School resource officers are police officers permanently assigned to a school or set of schools to serve as a law enforcement officer, law-related counselor and law-related education teacher. In addition to regular law enforcement duties, a safe schools resource officer might be assigned to help educate pupils on their rights and responsibilities under the law, to serve as a liaison between law enforcement and a principal in investigating criminal law violations occurring in a school or on school property, to serve as a liaison between students and social service agencies, to assist school administration and faculty in developing criminal justice programs, and to assist with school activities.

About NJASRO:

The New Jersey Association of School Resource Officers (N.J.A.S.R.O.) is a not-for-profit organization for school based law enforcement officers, school administrators, and school security/safety professionals working as partners to protect students, school faculty and staff and the schools they attend. The true and tested strength in the School Resource Officer program is that it is much more than a curriculum. The SRO Concept can easily be adapted to the needs of ANY community, desiring safe schools, and effective community partnerships. N.J.A.S.R.O. is a Chartered Member of the National Association of School Resource Officers (N.A.S.R.O). For more information go to www.NJASRO.com



From left to right are:
Robert Tessaro, NJASRO Executive Director, Sgt. Patrick Kissane, Fort Lee PD, NJASRO Vice President, State Trooper Gregory Williams, NJASRO Regional Director, Assemblywoman Joan Voss, State Senate President Richard Codey, State Senator Fred Madden, Officer John Morella, West Orange PD, NJASRO President, Det. Tim Gerity, Saddle River PD, NJASRO VP, Officer Keith Holley, West Orange PD, NJASRO Treasurer