

Washington, DC -- Continuing his commitment to support local law enforcement and reduce crime, U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) announced today that he has secured \$360,000 in congressionally-directed funding to fight gang activity in Oneida County and bolster Utica College's identity theft research program.

"As Oneida County District Attorney for 13 years, I worked with community members to fight gang violence and keep our community safe, and I know first-hand how important targeted funding is to keeping violent criminals off the street," **Arcuri said**. "As we have seen with the recent rash of arsons, crime is cyclical – simply because we have contained and reduced it for the present does not mean it goes away forever. To fight gangs, you have to gather all the information in one place and work with multiple jurisdictions to pinpoint and arrest gang members. Oneida County has come a long way in fighting gangs in our community, and this critical federal funding will enable local law enforcement and the District Attorney's office to keep our neighborhoods safe from arson and violent crime. We hope that this funding will be used to target gang activity which often relies on arson to scare and intimidate people in the community."

Arcuri was able to secure \$210,000 for the creation of an Oneida County Gang Task Force Initiative, to be spearheaded by the District Attorney's office in coordination with local law enforcement. Federal funds will be used to acquire a countywide information sharing database to timely and accurately analyze gang-related crime including arson, gun trafficking, drug sales, armed robbery and homicides. This infrastructure will enhance partnerships among local counties with emphasis on major cities in the county.

Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente Jr. said, "One of the priorities of my administration has been to address the issue of gangs to promote public safety and to help our youth find alternatives to joining gangs. This funding will help Oneida County work in partnership with the community and our local justice agencies to increase our efforts to reduce gang activities and help young people. I thank Congressman Arcuri for his efforts on our behalf to make our community safer."

"We are extremely grateful for this latest demonstration of Congressman Arcuri's unwavering dedication to public safety and law enforcement," **said Oneida County District Attorney Scott McNamara**. "The funds will allow local police agencies and the District Attorney's Office to develop a comprehensive and shared database of gang intelligence that will prove potent in our ongoing mission to investigate and curtail such

activity. It will also enhance our efforts to aggressively focus upon the crime of arson before it reaches the epidemic levels of years past, and promote deterrence through rigorous investigation and enforcement.”

The Oneida County Gang Task Force Initiative will collect, analyze, and visualize data related to the full spectrum of criminal activity, including arson. This initiative would provide a comprehensive picture of regional gang problems to federal, state and local criminal justice agencies and provide a forum for the necessary feedback of information to effectively fight gang activity.

Last year, Arcuri introduced The Providing Electronic Resources and Prosecutors Act (H.R. 3568), which would create a new competitive federal grant program for state and local prosecutors to fight gang violence and other violent crime. The grants would be used to hire additional prosecutors (assistant district attorneys) or to fund technology, equipment, and training for prosecutors and law enforcement in order to increase accurate identification of gang members and violent offenders, and to maintain databases with such information to facilitate coordination among law enforcement and prosecutors.

Arcuri also secured \$150,000 for Utica College’s Identity Theft Research Project. Funds will be used to embark upon a nationwide analysis of critical non-technological factors that affect the perpetration of identity theft in the United States. This initiative will examine the role of insiders and mail theft in the commission of identity theft and identity fraud through a multi-level effort based on data from a sample of state attorney general offices and metropolitan district attorney offices.

“Utica College is conducting world-class research to assist our local, state and federal law enforcement community in the fight against identity theft,” **Arcuri said**. “Only by investing in cutting-edge programs like this can we protect unsuspecting people from having their sensitive personal information stolen and used by criminals. This is yet another example of how Utica College serves as a tremendous educational and economic asset to our community.”

“Utica College is deeply appreciative of Congressman Arcuri’s significant commitment to efforts to better understand and prevent the complex crime of identity theft,” **said Utica College President Todd S. Hutton**

. “The resources he has secured will enable researchers with the Center for Identity Management and Information Protection to further the groundbreaking work that UC and its

research partners are already doing to protect the public and private sectors from identity theft perpetrators.”

The funds secured by Arcuri are part of the Fiscal Year 2009 Commerce-Justice-Science Bill Appropriations Act. The legislation is expected to be considered by the full House of Representatives later this month.

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