

Schumer, Astorino call for more terrorism funds

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WHITE PLAINS — Westchester County needs a larger share of federal homeland security funding, [money](#) used to protect local reservoirs and the Indian Point nuclear plant, County Executive Rob Astorino and U.S. Sen. Charles Schumer said Friday.

At issue is the money the county would receive as part of the [New York](#) metropolitan area allotment under the federal Urban Area Security Initiative — or rather, the money it wouldn't get.

Schumer and Astorino said the \$151 million that the metropolitan region is due to receive this year — which includes \$4.48 million for Westchester — is 18 percent of national anti-terrorism funding.

They said the local allotment should be at least 25 percent, the same number as in 2005, the first full year of the program.

"New Yorkers get it, but it seems some in Washington do not," said Schumer, who joined Astorino at the Westchester County [Office](#) of Emergency Management in Hawthorne.

"Despite the fact that New York is the number one target for terrorism, New York metro's share of one of the most important anti-terror initiatives, the Urban Area Security Initiative, has actually decreased over the last five years," Schumer said.

Schumer's statement comes after days of railing by New York's congressional delegation and local leaders, who said the White [House](#) is selling the Big Apple short in anti-terrorism funding.

Westchester's share pays for patrols of county reservoirs and the Indian Point nuclear [power plant](#) in Buchanan, and for surveillance equipment and a helicopter to survey high-risk locations.

"It is just common sense to put resources where they are needed most," Astorino said in a statement. "New York City and Westchester are inextricably linked in the fight to keep residents safe from terror attacks. Our roads, rail lines, water supplies, [energy sources](#), communications networks and businesses are all tied together."

In actual dollars, the metropolitan area has gotten more anti-terrorism funding in recent years. That's because the national pool of money for the urban initiative has risen to an all-time high of \$832 million for this year.

[The White House](#) noted this week that New York City also received more than \$100 million in federal stimulus money to beef up its port and transit security.

But Schumer and Astorino maintain that the larger terrorism threat facing metro New York warrants a larger share of the urban initiative money.

Schumer and other local congressional leaders are pushing for the city to get at least 25 percent of the national total, as it did in 2005. That would make New York's share \$208 million, with Westchester receiving \$6.2 million.

"New York and the region continues to be the number one target for terrorism in the United States and federal anti-terrorism funding needs to reflect that reality," Schumer said.