

## Press Release: December 18, 2000

**Congressman John W. Olver**  
1027 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-2101

Tel: 202-225-5335  
Fax: 202-226-1224



### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **OLVER, KENNEDY AND KERRY ANNOUNCE \$300,000 FOR BERKSHIRE COUNTY REGIONAL STRATEGIC RESPONSE TEAM**

WASHINGTON—Today, Congressman John W. Olver (D-1st District), Senator Edward M. Kennedy and Senator John F. Kerry announced that \$300,000 was included for the Berkshire County Regional Strategic Response Team (SRT) in the final version of the bill funding the Commerce, State and Justice Departments.

"The cities and towns of Berkshire County have put together a great cooperative effort to deal with crises throughout the county," Olver said.

Located in Pittsfield, the SRT assists in situations that require exceptional police action. The SRT will be trained to provide police action in the case of hostage situations, natural disasters, search and rescue operations, mob action, civil disturbances, unusual occurrences, or any other situation threatening the peace of the jurisdiction.

To date, 18 communities have entered into an agreement with the city of Pittsfield to use the city's Special Response Team during especially hazardous or dangerous police situations. The funding will be used for training and for purchasing equipment.

"As a region comprised entirely of rural towns and small cities, Berkshire County has a unique set of needs," Olver said. "In order to protect the quality of life in Berkshire County, we need well-trained, responsive law enforcement. This Strategic Response Team will be an invaluable asset to local residents in time of emergency, and this funding will help ensure that officers receive the necessary training and equipment."

Senator Kennedy said, "We need to give our communities the assistance they need to deal with any crisis. This funding for Berkshire County's innovative team will provide the training and equipment that are essential to enable law enforcement to respond quickly and effectively to emergency situations."

"Berkshire County is taking the lead in addressing their safety needs proactively -- putting prevention first. I'm pleased that we have been able to help Berkshire's cities and towns create a Strategic Response Team with the training and equipment needed to assist local residents in times of emergency. This federal funding, the result of teamwork with Senator Kennedy and Congressman Olver, will guarantee that Berkshire County authorities will have the expertise to meet any challenge," Senator Kerry said.