

Office of the Governor

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NEWS RELEASE

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Governor's Weekly Radio Message Focuses on Fighting Crime in New Jersey

Gov. Christie Whitman provides a weekly radio message to radio stations throughout the state. Each week, the message focuses on a different concern or event of interest to New Jerseyans.

This week the Governor discusses the recently released 1997 crime statistics for New Jersey. She announced that reported crime dropped 6 percent last year, the lowest level of overall crime in 24 years in our state. The decrease means that 20,000 less New Jerseyans have been victims of a crime.

Attached is the text of the message.

The radio message can be accessed by calling the Governor's actuality line at 609-292-3249. It will be available today, beginning at noon, and will run through the weekend.

Governor's Weekly Radio Message August 14, 1998 Fighting Crime in New Jersey

Every time we prevent a crime, we promote a better New Jersey.

According to the recently released 1997 crime statistics for New Jersey, overall reported crime in our state dropped another 6 percent last year. Violent crime decreased by 7 percent, including a 12 percent decrease in rape and a 10 percent decrease in robbery. And among non-violent crime, car theft decreased by 11 percent.

Considering that the previous year took us to a 23-year low, this further decrease is encouraging news indeed for New Jersey. And once again, it's better than the decrease nationwide.

It's important to remember that these statistics aren't just numbers. They represent a truly safer New Jersey. Had we not been winning the fight against crime -- had we even just maintained the status quo -- an additional 20,000 New Jerseyans would have become crime victims last year.

That's 20,000 people who have not suffered at the hands of criminals, whose lives haven't been shattered by crime. And there's no way of knowing who they are -- they might have been your brother or your spouse, your uncle or your child -- or mine.

That's why all of us who enjoy the security that comes from a safer New Jersey owe a great debt to our men and women in blue. Police officers put their lives on the line every time they pin on their badges. Yet they continue to do their job with the same level of professionalism and dedication that has earned them the respect of every law-abiding New Jerseyan.

Of course, the battle against crime is not over. But we are winning important victories. We're putting more criminals behind bars, and we're keeping them there longer. We're enforcing the tough laws we've put on the books over the past four and a half years. In short, we're making New Jersey a safer place in which to live, work, and raise a family.

So, we will continue to turn the tide. We will continue to do all we can to make law enforcement's job easier. In fact, just a few days ago, I signed a law authorizing the civil commitment of sex offenders who have a mental abnormality or personality disorder that makes them likely to commit another act of sexual violence. I made a promise to pursue this legislation in my State of the State address this year, and it's a promise that I'm proud to keep.

We will continue to build on the success we've achieved. Every time we prevent a crime, we promote a better New Jersey. That's why we will carry on this fight until every one of New Jersey's streets and neighborhoods is safe and secure for the people of this state.
