



## **NEWS:**

# **Lawmakers Recognize Efforts to Protect Domestic Violence Witnesses, Victims**

**January 6, 2017** – State legislators and members of the law enforcement community gathered at Legislative Hall this afternoon (1/6/17) to recognize the creator of a groundbreaking protection program.

In the wake of a February 2013 shooting incident that left three people dead in the lobby of the New Castle County Courthouse, Capitol Police Chief John Horsman saw a need to safeguard people involved in domestic violence-related court appearances.

Chief Horsman's efforts, with the cooperation of other law enforcement officials, led to the establishment of the Violence Intervention Program (VIP). Operated by the Delaware Capitol Police, the program evaluates the threat of potential violence and provides protection to individuals via security details and escorts.

Last month, the VIP was selected by the Delaware Criminal Justice Council to receive the inaugural ["Beau" Biden Outstanding Criminal Justice Program Award](#).

Since the program's creation, it has provided more than 300 escorts.

At Thursday's Capitol event, State Sen. Dave Lawson, R-Marydel, presented a Senate Tribute recognizing Chief Horsman for his efforts.

State Rep. Harvey Kenton, R-Milford, who attended the event, noted that the initiative has been cited as the first of its kind in the nation. "I think this is a model that you will see agencies in other states begin to copy and implement," he said.

Following the presentation, State Rep. Dave Wilson, R-Cedar Creek Hundred, reflected on the need for such security. "Emotions often run high and hot in domestic disputes," he said. "I believe this additional layer of protection will help prevent tragedies like the one that occurred at the New Castle County Courthouse. Chief Horsman and the Capitol Police are to be commended for the work they are doing to keep the people in our public facilities safe from harm."