

Washington, DC -- Today, U.S. Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) joined a bipartisan majority in voting for legislation to expand service opportunities for up to 250,000 Americans to help get the country through the economic crisis through volunteerism.

“In times of economic trouble, the most vulnerable members of our community need help more than ever,” **Arcuri said**. “President Obama called for all Americans to dedicate themselves to serve in their communities and I know we can rise to the challenge. This legislation goes further than just community service, it strengthens programs that give young people the tools they need for future careers and success in the workforce and helps families pay for college.”

The Generations Invigorating Volunteerism and Education (GIVE) Act (H.R. 1388), which passed the House of Representatives today, would more than triple the number of volunteers nationwide, from the current 75,000 to 250,000, and increase the education reward they receive to \$5,350 for next year, the same as the maximum Pell Grant scholarship award. The education award would also be linked to match future boosts in the Pell Grant scholarship in order to keep up with rising college costs.

In New York State, more than 76,000 people of all ages currently help to meet local needs, strengthen communities, and increase civic engagement through 233 national service projects across the state. This year, the Corporation for National and Community Service will commit more than \$69, million to support New York communities through national service initiatives.

The GIVE Act would also provide new incentives for middle and high school students to volunteer in their communities. It would create a Summer of Service program to engage students in service and allows them to earn a \$500 education award to be used for college costs.

In addition, the GIVE Act would:

- Strengthen existing service programs and create new innovative programs to help improve student achievement and graduation in low-income schools, expand health care access, provide seniors with help living independently, enhance services for veterans, and help build a green, energy-efficient economy;
- Establish a Veterans Corp to meet the unique needs of veterans and military families;

- Expand the focus of the National Civilian Community Corps to infrastructure improvement, environmental and energy conservation, and urban and rural development, in addition to disaster relief;
- Create new opportunities for Baby Boomers and seniors to serve and volunteer;
Recruit scientists and engineers into service to keep America competitive; and
- Build a nationwide community-based infrastructure to leverage investments in service.
The Senate is also considering similar legislation.

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