

Washington, DC -- U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) announced today that the City of Cortland Fire Department would receive \$8,512 through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program for fire prevention and safety.

"Local first responders not only put their lives on the line to protect our communities, they work within our communities to educate the public and prevent dangerous situations," **said Arcuri, a member of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus**

. "I am glad to report that with this grant the Cortland Fire Department can expand and enhance its fire safety programs. Since taking office, I have consistently supported increased funding for this federal program to bring new safety technology to our communities without increasing the local tax burden."

The City of Cortland Fire Department will use these funds to purchase an improved training aid for fire extinguisher education and demonstration training. The new fire training unit will operate using only propane and water, instead of more hazardous materials that need clean up and preparation time. The department will use the new unit to improve their existing community training programs.

"This means that that the first time people see fire after the training, it won't be the first time they've seen fire. This is a very safe, controlled and clean method of doing the training," **said City of Cortland Fire Chief, Dennis M. Baron**

Since taking office, Arcuri has announced over \$399,375 in Assistance to Firefighter Grants for emergency first responders in Cortland County.

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFGP) awards grants to firefighters, emergency response personnel and first responders to enhance response capabilities and to more effectively protect the health and safety of first responders and the citizens in their communities. AFGP grants provide resources for training, first responder health and safety programs, and response equipment and vehicles.

Since 2004, AFGP has provided a total of almost \$2.2 billion nationwide to first-responder organizations to purchase response equipment, personal protective equipment, and vehicles. In fiscal year 2007, AFGP will award approximately \$490 million directly to fire departments and EMS organizations to enhance their response capabilities.

Legislation cosponsored by Arcuri to provide tax assistance for volunteer emergency responders to help area fire departments retain and recruit volunteers was included in the Heroes Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax Act (H.R. 3997) which passed the House of Representatives in November.

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