

Washington, DC -- U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) today announced that the Maine Fire Department in Broome County will receive \$52,215 through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFGP).

"I am pleased to be able to announce this grant to help the Maine Fire Department upgrade lifesaving equipment at no new cost to local taxpayers," **said Arcuri, a member of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus**

. "Federal grants like this one provide local departments with the resources they need to invest in new technology and keep our families safe. In Congress, I have joined colleagues on both sides of the aisle to request increased funding for this grant program and will continue working in Washington to bring federal resources back to local communities."

The Maine Fire Department will use this grant to purchase new hydraulic rescue equipment which will be used to rescue victims from car accidents. The new equipment will replace outdated equipment and allow the department to fully outfit the department's heavy rescue truck for any type of emergency.

"It allows us to equip the Maine Fire Department with state of the art equipment at no direct impact to the taxpayers in the town," **said David Silverstein, Chief of the Maine Fire Department**

. "The funding will also allow us to assist neighboring communities through the mutual aid plan. It really benefits the entire Brome County community as well as Tioga County. This grant will have great impact on saving lives on a day-to-day basis."

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFGP) awards grants to firefighters, emergency response personnel and first responders throughout the nation 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.

In March, Arcuri joined 100 Members of Congress in writing to the House Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee requesting additional funding for the AFG Program as well as Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grants that provide assistance to fire departments to increase the number of firefighters and first responders.

In June, the House passed the fiscal year 2008 Homeland Security Appropriations bill, which included a substantial increase in funding for AFGP and SAFER. The bill includes \$800 million for AFGP in fiscal year 2008.

Earlier this year, Arcuri also cosponsored the Volunteer Responder Incentive Protection Act (H.R. 943) which would provide tax assistance for volunteer emergency responders to help area fire departments retain and recruit volunteers.

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