

*Washington, DC* - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that the Binghamton Fire Department has been awarded a \$159,116 federal grant to purchase new firefighting and safety equipment. The funds come from the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG), which is administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the United States Fire Administration (USFA).

"These federal funds will provide much-needed equipment and protective gear to support the dedicated efforts of our firefighters in the Binghamton Fire Department," Hinchey said. "This new equipment will help keep firefighters safe as they respond to emergency calls in the community while sparing the local community from having to shoulder the cost of this necessary equipment."

The funds allocated to the Binghamton Fire Department will allow the purchase of personal escape systems for firefighters for use in cases where ladders and stairs are not options for escape. The funds will also go toward the purchase of eight new data terminal sets, which will be used on fire trucks to provide mapping information of hydrants, hazardous materials, utility lines and pertinent information relevant during an emergency.

"With tight budgets and the lack of funding for new equipment, we wouldn't have been able to get this critical equipment now without this program," Binghamton Fire Department Chief Daniel Thomas said.

As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, Hinchey has worked to secure full funding for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, since its inception in 2001. Since the fire grant program started, more than \$14 million in grants have been awarded to fire and emergency departments in Hinchey's congressional district.

The congressman has sponsored a number of workshops across his Congressional district to help fire departments successfully navigate the grant application process. Hinchey is also the author of the SERVE (Supporting Emergency Responders' Volunteer Efforts) Act, which would provide a \$1,000 federal tax credit to individuals who are active members of volunteer firefighting and EMS organizations.