

*Jeffersonville, NY* - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that the Jeffersonville Fire Department has been awarded \$102,446 in federal grant funding to purchase a wide array of new equipment to keep the public safe and protect firefighters.

"These federal funds play a vital role in ensuring that volunteer firefighters have the necessary equipment to quickly respond to fires and other emergencies while keeping themselves safe," Hinchey said. "Fire districts like Jeffersonville often need new equipment, but lack the funding to obtain them, which is why these federal grants are so crucial. Our local communities rely on volunteer firefighters, and it is absolutely necessary that these individuals have the best equipment possible."

The Jeffersonville Fire Department will use the federal funds to purchase a thermal imaging camera that allows firefighters to find unconscious victims in smoke-filled rooms, pinpoint the sources of fires, and detect structural dangers before they cause injury and death. The grant will also allow Jeffersonville to purchase self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) for all volunteer firefighters, and a fixed cascade fill station used to refill their SCBA tanks. The fire department will also receive funding for 10 complete sets of turnout gear, 37 pairs of boots, 17 spare air cylinders, extrication equipment that will be used to remove individuals from vehicles that are involved in accidents, and an RIT pack to aid in the rescue of firemen caught in a structure.

The funds come from the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, which is administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the United States Fire Administration (USFA). 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 \$12.5 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. The congressman plans to reintroduce that bill in the near future.