

Rep. Bilirakis to Present Grant Funding to Local Fire Departments

PALM HARBOR, Fla. (17 Mar.) - U.S. Rep. Gus M. Bilirakis (R-Fla.), member of the House Committee on Homeland Security and the Congressional Fire Services Caucus, this week will present more than \$58,000 in combined federal funding from the Department of Homeland Security's Fiscal Year 2007 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program.

On Tuesday, Mar. 18, Congressman Bilirakis will present East Lake Fire Rescue in Palm Harbor, Fla. with a check for \$18,000, and on Friday, Mar. 21, he will present the City of Oldsmar Fire and Rescue in North Oldsmar, Fla. with a check for \$40,014. Both grants will go towards enhancing each department's overall operations and safety.

"The Assistance to Firefighters Grant program is one of the most effective and popular federal grant programs because its results are immediate in enhancing our first responders' ability to meet the needs of their communities," said Bilirakis, who signed a letter earlier this year opposing proposed cuts to the AFG program. "The hard work and dedication that our fire departments demonstrate in keeping our families safe will only be broadened with newer and more effective lifesaving technology these grants will provide."

The AFG Program awards one-year grants directly to fire departments to support the nation's firefighters in their service to their communities. The FY 2007 program provided approximately \$490 million in competitive grants to fire departments and non affiliated EMS organizations. Since 2004, AFG has provided a total of almost \$2.2 billion to first-responder organizations to purchase response equipment, personal protective equipment, and vehicles.

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WHO: U.S. Rep. Gus M. Bilirakis (FL-09)

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WHAT: Congressman Bilirakis Presents More Than \$58,000 in Fire Grant Funding to Local Fire Companies

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WHEN/WHERE:

Tuesday, March 18th at 6:30 p.m.

East Lake Fire Rescue

3375 Tarpon Lake Blvd.

Palm Harbor, Fla. 34685

Friday, March 21st at 4:30 p.m.

City of Oldsmar Fire and Rescue

Fire Station No. 54

225 Pine Avenue

North Oldsmar, Fla. 34677

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CONTACT: For more information about these events, please call Congressman Gus M. Bilirakis's Palm Harbor District office at (727) 773-2871. All media inquiries should be directed to John Tomaszewski in Bilirakis's Washington, DC office at (202) 225-5755.