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Volunteer Fire Department to Pay for New Life-Saving Equipment
Funds Will Pay for Thermal Imaging Camera, Save Local Taxpayers from Full Cost

Washington, DC - Continuing his efforts to ensure that local first responders have all the equipment they need to protect the public and themselves, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-Fair Lawn) today announced that the Fairview Volunteer Fire Department has been awarded a \$10,800 federal grant to pay for a new, life-saving thermal imaging camera. The grant comes from the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program, which was established under legislation Rothman cosponsored.

"This federal grant will pay for a new thermal imaging camera that will help save the lives of residents and firefighters, while enabling firefighters to put out fires more quickly so that property damage is reduced," Rothman said. "Government's first priority must be to protect the people, which is why bringing federal grants for first responders to New Jersey is so important. Every day, Fairview's volunteer firefighters risk their lives to keep residents safe. Providing them with this state-of-the-art equipment is the least we can do for these heroes."

The new thermal imaging camera will greatly improve the Department's rescue efforts in locating people trapped in a burning, smoke-filled building. It will also help to locate firefighters who might be lost, trapped, or injured and will assist firefighters in locating the source of a fire in order to put it out more quickly.

The dire need for a new thermal imaging camera was made clear earlier this year when the Fairview Volunteer Fire Department responded to a call in which the entire building was filled with smoke from a fire burning in the basement. Upon learning that there might be an 8 year-old boy trapped on the second floor, a search team was immediately sent into the building to attempt to locate him. The boy turned out not to be home at the time of the fire, but three search team firefighters were lost in the smoke filled home and couldn't find their way out because they had become disoriented. The Department's only thermal imaging camera was being used in the basement of the home to locate the base of the fire and was therefore unavailable to the search team. Luckily, the three lost firefighters eventually found their way out just in time as each had run out of breathing air in their Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) equipment.

"Fighting fires is extraordinarily dangerous, so we must ensure that firefighters have every piece of equipment they need to make their jobs as safe as possible," Rothman said. "In addition to helping protect the people of Fairview, this federal grant saves local taxpayers \$10,800 of the estimated \$12,400 needed to purchase the new thermal imaging camera," Rothman said.

The funds are administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the United States Fire Administration (USFA), which are both part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Local fire departments interested in applying for future Assistance to Firefighters Grant program grants are encouraged to call Brendan Gill in Rothman's Hackensack office at 201-646-0808 for more information.

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