



Washington, D.C. – Today, Congressman John Olver announced that the Greenfield Fire Department will receive \$474,572 in federal funding to hire replacement firefighters for the largest fire department in Franklin County, Massachusetts. The funding for the new hires was awarded through the FY 2010 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) which is administered by the Department of Homeland Security.

"I commend Chief Winn and the Greenfield Fire Department for their hard work," said Congressman John Olver (D-MA). "The Greenfield Fire Department receives the highest number of emergency calls in Franklin County. This funding will allow the department to hire six desperately needed replacement firefighters." Olver said.

"I couldn't be happier with receiving this notification of award under the SAFER Grant. The Greenfield Fire Department is currently suffering the largest vacancy of career firefighters since World War II. All of these vacancies have been the result of attrition and not layoffs. However at the end of the day there are still 9 less career firefighters in this department than there were 3 years ago. This award of funding for 6 career firefighters is really nothing short of a miracle for this community and this fantastic fire department," said Greenfield Fire Chief Michael Winn.

The Greenfield Fire Department also responds to events outside of Greenfield in a mutual aid capacity for the rural towns with on-call and volunteer fire departments. Consequently, the Greenfield Fire Department receives the highest number of emergency calls in Franklin County.

Despite these high demands, decreases in local aid and the resulting budget cuts for the

department have resulted in an inability to replace seven firefighters who have been lost due to attrition. Currently, seven firefighters are on duty 24-hours a day seven days a week.

The purpose of the AFG is to award grants directly to fire departments and EMS organizations that are unaffiliated with a hospital to enhance their ability to protect the health and safety of the public. Using a competitive process that is overseen by fire service subject matter experts, AFG grants are awarded to applicants whose requests best address the priorities of the AFG Program.

“I am especially glad to see the Greenfield Fire Department receive this funding in light of the misguided attempt to cut AFG’s SAFER hiring grants on the floor of the House yesterday,” Congressman Olver said. “I support this essential program, and was pleased to join my colleagues in voting to restore these needed funds.”

For more information, please contact Greenfield Fire Chief Michael Winn at (413) 774-4737 ext.1104.

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