

LARSON TO INTRODUCE BILL TO AID FRONT LINE MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS IN DEALING WITH TERRORIST ATTACKS

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HARTFORD—U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) will introduce legislation to fund \$1 billion for local fire and police departments, emergency medical teams and allied health professionals, who constitute the first line of response to terrorist attacks. The bill is called the Municipal Preparation and Strategic Response Act of 2001, and Larson will introduce it in the House when he returns to Congress.

The bill would provide funding for municipal agencies for the strategic planning needed to ensure they are fully prepared, equipped and trained for emergency and security issues that arise from terrorist attacks. It would also provide for a coordinated regional response utilizing federal, state and local agencies.

“The front line in the defense of our homeland are the local fire departments, police forces, emergency medical teams and area health professionals, and since they respond first, they take the greatest risk,” said Larson. “There is a need for a coordinated response between all local, state and federal agencies to acts of terrorism such as those seen on September 11. We must ensure that they have the equipment, training and communications strategies they need to respond as effectively as possible. We need to coordinate our response from the bottom up, beginning with those departments and agencies that are the first on the scene as was the case in New York City and Washington, D.C.”

On Sept. 17 Larson met in Hartford with roughly 40 state and local officials including fire and police chiefs, mayors, first selectmen, as well as state senators and representatives, who concur with the concept of funding front line response issues.

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