

## LARSON ANNOUNCES \$199,500 FEDERAL HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT FOR PORTLAND

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HARTFORD – U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-1) today announced that the Portland Volunteer Fire Department has been awarded a \$199,500 grant from the Department of Homeland Security through the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program. The department will use the funds to upgrade and purchase a comprehensive and compliant accountability system to include breathing apparatus and communications equipment.

The department's goal has been to purchase and upgrade this critical equipment both to protect their firefighters and meet national firefighter safety standards, said Larson. This funding will give the department the opportunity to meet that goal so they can best serve the community and minimize the danger to their volunteers. Firefighters, police officers, and emergency medical personnel represent the front lines in the effort to keep our communities and our families safe and it is the responsibility of Congress to ensure that programs like the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program are properly funded.

This year the 2006 Assistance to Firefighter grants will award approximately \$485 million directly to fire departments around the nation. Portland will receive funding from the Operations and Safety Program within the Assistance to Firefighters Grants. The funding can be used for training, equipment, personal protective equipment, wellness and fitness, and modifications to fire stations and facilities.

In April 2005 Larson wrote to the Department of Homeland Security to urge that today's funding be awarded to the Portland Volunteer Fire Department.

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