

REP. LARSON VOTES TO PROTECT AMERICA, INVEST IN OUR NATION'S HOMELAND SECURITY

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Legislation includes critical funding and accountability

WASHINGTON- Today, Congressman John B. Larson (CT-1) voted to approve sweeping legislation to protect America and invest in homeland security. The Homeland Security Appropriations bill was approved today makes border security a top priority, provides additional border patrol agents for the country, provides first responders with additional training and equipment, improves aviation and port security, and includes strong accountability measures in order to ensure that taxpayer dollars are being well spent.

"Congress has a responsibility to help protect our communities from those who would do us harm," said Congressman Larson. "I am proud to support legislation that makes border security a top priority and gives our first responders the tools and resources they need to do their jobs in a time of crisis, including funding that directly impacts the Hartford area."

The 2008 Homeland Security Appropriations bill:

- Includes over \$50 million for the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) of which will directly benefit Connecticut's local first responder planning, training, and equipment. This funding is critical for the Hartford capital region's ability to respond to major disasters and terrorist attacks.
- Includes funding for 3,000 additional Border Patrol agents, bringing the number of Border Patrol agents to 17,819.
- Rejects the President's proposed \$1 billion cut for training and equipment for First Responders and instead expands support for local law enforcement personnel, firefighters and other first responders.
- Invests in port security by significantly increasing funding to protect critical port facilities and infrastructure.
- Improves aviation security by providing funding for new explosive detection systems at airports and funding to double the amount of cargo screened on passenger aircraft.

The legislation approved by the House today also includes strong oversight provisions to ensure the careful spending of taxpayers' dollars by the Department of Homeland Security and eliminates wasteful no-bid contracts.

“The American people expect their dollars to be well spent on important efforts to secure our nation, not wasted on no-bid contracts,” added Larson. “The Democratic Congress has insisted on tough new accountability measures to ensure we protect our communities and spend taxpayers' dollars are well spent.”

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