

Castle Announces \$155,402 in Federal Funding for Wilmington Fire Department for Operations and Safety Costs -- January 22, 2007

Wilmington, DE -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle today announced federal funding totaling \$155, 402 for the Wilmington Fire Department through the Department of Homeland Security Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program to be used for Operations & Safety costs. Castle joined Wilmington Fire Chief Willie J. Patrick Jr. and Mayor James A. Baker at Fire Station #1 in Wilmington today to make the announcement.

The Wilmington Fire Department will use the money to purchase air purifying systems for the Wilmington fire stations as well as to execute wellness and fitness tests on each firefighter, so that the results can highlight areas in which the firefighters can lead a healthier lifestyle and therefore improve their ability to respond to fires and emergencies. Specifically, the air purifying systems will soak up all the exhaust fumes released from a fire truck when it is turned on in the station.

"Today is a great day for the Wilmington Fire Department and the city of Wilmington. Through this federal funding, the seven fire stations in Wilmington will be able to focus on the health of our incredibly valuable firefighters through air purifying systems in the stations and wellness and fitness tests. Firefighters spend each day working to ensure the public's safety and this money will take a small step to make sure we are, in turn, looking after their protection and well-being," Congressman Castle said.

According to the Department of Homeland Security, the Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG) program provides competitive grants to fire departments and nonaffiliated EMS organizations each year to help improve their response capabilities and to more effectively protect the health and safety of the public and emergency response personnel. Some of the various activities that AFG fund are training, firefighting equipment, personal protective equipment, EMS equipment, wellness and fitness, and health and safety modifications to stations and facilities.

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