

## Congressman Childers Encourages North Mississippi Fire Departments to Apply for AFG Grants

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Washington, DC - Congressman Travis Childers (D-MS) is encouraging local North Mississippi Fire Departments to apply for FY 2009 Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). DHS recently posted the AFG Program Guidance online, and applications for these grants may be submitted through Wednesday, May 20, 2009, at 4:00 p.m. CT.

"These grants are an important and significant investment in the safety of local communities nationwide, and I strongly encourage fire departments in Mississippi's First Congressional District to take advantage of these funds," said Congressman Childers. "In today's tough economic times, the AFG program will help provide fire departments with the equipment and resources they need, and I will do everything I can to ensure that available funds go to applicants in North Mississippi."

Nationally, the AFG awards, which will be distributed in phases, will ultimately provide approximately \$510 million to fire departments and nonaffiliated emergency medical service organizations throughout the country. AFG awards aim to enhance response capabilities and to more effectively protect the health and safety of the public with respect to fire and other hazards. The grants enable local fire departments and emergency medical services organizations to purchase or receive training, conduct first responder health and safety programs, and buy equipment and response vehicles.

The American Reinvestment and Recovery Act also allocates \$210 million to the AFG program for facility construction, renovation and enhancements.

An applicant tutorial is available through the <http://www.firegrantsupport.com/> website. The tutorial provides valuable grant information and walks potential applicants through the preparation and submittal of competitive applications. In addition, the applicant tutorial will provide an overview of the funding priorities and evaluation criteria.

Applicants who have questions regarding the Assistance to Firefighters Grants opportunity should contact the help desk at 1-866-274-0960 or at [firegrants@dhs.gov](mailto:firegrants@dhs.gov). During the application period, the help desk will operate Monday to Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (CT), but is prepared to revise hours of operation based on volume and demand.

The AFG Program is administered by the DHS Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Grant Programs Directorate in coordination with the U.S. Fire Administration.

For access to the FY09 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program Guidance or FAQs - visit [www.firegrantsupport.com/afg/](http://www.firegrantsupport.com/afg/).

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