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To: Mayor Bill Samaras and Members of the City Council  
From: Eileen Donoghue, City Manager *EMD*  
Date: August 8, 2018  
Subject: Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG) for Lowell Fire Department

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Please see the attached press release from Congresswoman Tsongas's office announcing a \$917,007 federal grant award through the Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG) program. The funding from this grant will go towards the purchase of new equipment for the Lowell Fire Department, including firefighter breathing apparatus, protective turnout gear, and an air compressor/tank refill system.

Please let me know if you have any further questions regarding this issue.

CC: Chief Jeff Winward, Lowell Fire Dept.

**PRESS RELEASE FROM CONGRESSWOMAN NIKI TSONGAS**  
MASSACHUSETTS THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
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## **Lowell, Fitchburg Fire Departments to receive over \$1.4 million in federal assistance**

WASHINGTON, DC – July 27, 2018 – The Lowell and Fitchburg Fire Departments have been awarded over \$1.4 million in federal funding through the Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG) program.

The Lowell Fire Department will receive **\$917,007** to be used to purchase a firefighter breathing apparatus, firefighter protective gear, and an air compressor / refill system.

The Fitchburg Fire Department will receive **\$486,364** to be used to purchase a pumper truck.

The Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) program and the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program are the two main federal programs supporting local fire departments by helping them support staff, buy equipment and provide adequate training.

**Congresswoman Niki Tsongas said:** “Ensuring our fire departments have equipment that protects firefighters’ health is critical to their mission. The Lowell and Fitchburg Fire Departments received these needed federal funds through a competitive grant process, which speaks to both the quality of their applications and the Departments in general. Given the constraints on state and local budgets, competitive grant funds such as these help to maintain public safety in our communities and provide first responders with access to the resources they need to save lives. Our volunteer and career firefighters sacrifice a great deal to protect our communities and it is our duty to provide them with the equipment, staffing and training they need to keep their departments running safely and efficiently.”

**Senator Elizabeth Warren said:** “Every day, firefighters across the Commonwealth put their lives on the line to keep our communities safe. I am grateful for their tireless service and glad that these federal grants will help ensure our brave firefighters in Fitchburg and Lowell have the resources they need to carry out their mission safely and effectively.”

**Senator Ed Markey said:** “Firefighters and police officers in Lowell and Fitchburg are committed to ensuring the safety and security of these great cities and these new grants will enhance their ability to do so. I know that these men and women are our hometown heroes, but even heroes need help. I commend the leaders of Lowell and Fitchburg for their hard work in obtaining these important federal funds.”

**Lowell Fire Department Chief Jeffrey Winward said:** “This grant will enable us to replace our worn out turnout gear, which protects firefighters from the heat and flames of a fire. We will replace our self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), which allow our firefighters to breathe in smoke filled buildings, many of which are past their useful life, and have become very expensive to repair. Our cascade system, which fills our SCBA air bottles, as well as our dive team’s

SCUBA bottles, is ten years old, and it too will be replaced. Replacing our turnout gear with modern, state of the art gear, will not only keep our firefighters safe from fire, but will also help protect our firefighters from cancer.”

**Lowell Mayor William Samaras said:** “Every year, we are discovering more and more the dangers that firefighters face not only in fighting fires, but throughout the course of their duties. This FEMA grant will to help ensure that our firefighters are provided with the protection they need as they keep our community safe. I want to thank Congresswoman Tsongas for her tireless work in supporting our first responders.”

**Fitchburg Mayor Stephen DiNatale said:** “I want to thank our federal delegation for supporting Fitchburg’s FEMA AFG grant application. This \$486,364 Grant will be used to replace Engine 2 at our Oak Hill Fire Station. The new pumper truck will continue to enable our Fire Department to further strengthen our commitment to providing the most proficient and state of the art fire protection to the residents of Fitchburg.”

For more information on Assistance to Firefighters Grants: <https://www.fema.gov/welcome-assistance-firefighters-grant-program>.

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