

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3205

February 2, 2018

Mr. Brock Long
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Administrator Long,

I write in support of the application submitted by the Depew Fire Department for funding from the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program through the Federal Emergency Management Agency. This funding will allow the department to replace their Self Contained Breathing Apparatuses (SCBAs).

The Depew Fire Department is a volunteer organization that serves the Western New York Village of Depew, which is ten miles outside of the city of Buffalo. Due to close proximity to Lake Erie, the Village is prone to lake effect snowstorms that cripple the area's transportation. There have been four such natural disasters declared within the last ten years. The Department is the largest in Erie County and operates out of three strategically placed stations, responding to approximately 375 calls per year in their 5.9-mile district.

The requested funding will be used to replace their SCBAs. Currently, they have 54 SCBAs that are 12 years of old. Yearly maintenance and monthly inspection have shown routine high-pressure leaks, low-pressure leaks at the regulator, and several PASS alarms. Many of these incidents have occurred during fire suppression operations and emergency incidents. The masks have also started tearing and not sealing properly, causing the masks to fog up and cloud field of vision. All of these issues cause safety issues for the firefighters that could lead to injury or death. Funding will allow for this faulty equipment to be replaced, ensuring that firefighters are able to respond to emergency situations as safely and effectively as possible.

I ask that you please give this application your full consideration. If you have any questions, or desire further information, please do not hesitate to contact my staff member, Laura Driscoll, at (202) 224-4451.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator