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PAUL D. TONKO

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COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE,
AND TECHNOLOGY

December 20, 2024

Pamela Williams
Assistant Administrator for Grant Programs
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Assistant Administrator Williams,

I write in support of the application from the Village of Voorheesville to the Fiscal Year 2024 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program. The Village is seeking federal support to purchase Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Face Masks and a Washer/Extractor/Dryer for turnout gear and personal protective equipment (PPE). The Village's application identifier is EMW-2024-FG-05213

The Village of Voorheesville's Fire Department is all volunteer and provides fire protection over 3,300 residents. The Fire Department participates in numerous community activities and fundraisers each year, such as a parade on Memorial Day, a ceremony honoring local veterans, a 5K and 15K run, and an evening village party at the firehouse featuring fireworks and a live band. Along with girl scout activities, blood drives, and public gatherings, the Fire Department also organizes an annual Fall Festival and "Breakfast with Santa." It is said that the Village has a "palpable" sense of community, and the Fire Department volunteers are the thread that ties everything together.

During its recent risk assessment, the Village and Department identified two urgent needs: the replacement of its standard household washing machine with a PPE Washer/Extractor/Dryer and the purchase of new SCBA Face Masks to ensure each volunteer has their own. The current washing machine does not meet the standards for cleaning firefighting equipment and leaves its volunteers vulnerable to carcinogens and other toxins. It must be replaced to protect the health and safety of the volunteers. Regarding the SCBA Face Masks, the volunteers currently share masks leading to concerns about properly cleaning after every use and the proper fit for each user cannot be maintained. This must be addressed to minimize exposure to contaminated equipment.

Your full and fair consideration of this request, consistent with current laws, rules, regulations, and agency policy, is appreciated.

Sincerely,

PAUL D. TONKO
Member of Congress

PDT/npl