

WASHINGTON (November 18) - Congressman Spencer Bachus (AL-6) today voted to continue a federal fire grant program that has helped fire companies in the 6th District improve safety and protect citizens in their communities.

Bachus also announced that applications are now being accepted from fire companies with critical staffing needs for 2009 SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant Program) grants.

In voting for the Fire Grants Reauthorization Act, which passed the House overwhelmingly, Congressman Bachus said, "Firefighters are on the front lines every day, protecting lives and saving property. They deserve modern equipment and the best in safety gear. During these tough economic times, many departments are struggling and this program helps them to acquire needed equipment that they could not otherwise afford. We need to make sure that our fire companies have the necessary resources to quickly and effectively respond to emergency calls."

Bachus supported language barring the activist group ACORN from receiving funds under the bill.

Over the last two years, 64 grants have been awarded to fire departments in the 6th District for the purchase of rescue and safety equipment, acquisition of new vehicles, and firefighter recruitment and retention through the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program and SAFER program authorized by the legislation.

Bachus said today that fire companies interested in applying for 2009 SAFER grants have until December 18, 2009 to submit an application to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

The program helps departments to increase the number of trained, frontline firefighters in their communities with the aim of improving 24-hour coverage and response times to incidents.

Fire companies can access an application and information on the program at www.firegrantsupport.com/safer and also by calling Caleb Goodwyn in Congressman Bachus' Birmingham office at 205-969-2296.