

For the 2003 program, Congress appropriated, and President Bush signed into law, \$750 million in direct assistance in support of the nation's firefighters and the services they deliver. This year FEMA received approximately 19,950 applications for the 2003 grant program.

The application period closed in early April 2003 and the total request of all departments, including the non-federal share, totaled approximately \$2.5 billion.

Funding priorities for each of the

activities were established based on recommendations from nine major national fire service organizations. The applications most closely conforming to program priorities were reviewed and scored by peer review panels, which began in mid April and were completed in early May. Awards will be announced on a weekly basis beginning in June 2003, with the competitive funds obligated by the end of September 2004.

The Assistance for Firefighters Grant Program is administered by the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and assists rural, urban and suburban fire departments throughout the United States. These funds are used by the nation's firefighters to increase the effectiveness of firefighting operations, firefighter health and safety programs, new fire apparatus, emergency medical service

programs, and fire prevention and safety programs.

Congressman Bachus congratulates this Fire department for its hard work in securing this grant because they will further provide the citizens of the 6th district with added fire and

medical response
capabilities.