

WASHINGTON – Congressman Spencer Bachus (AL-6) today warned that fire protection in Alabama communities could be put at risk by a new federal regulation.

Bachus wants fire and emergency vehicles exempted from an Environmental Protection Agency rule affecting diesel powered vehicles. In a letter, Bachus told EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson that local fire chiefs are concerned about the cost and effectiveness of exhaust filters being mandated by the agency.

"Fire chiefs have told me that fire trucks have actually broken down while responding to calls because of complications caused by this equipment. When lives are at stake our firefighters and citizens count on emergency vehicles that work dependably. It doesn't appear the EPA fully thought through the impact this regulation would have on our fire and rescue services," Congressman Bachus said.

Fire officials say the filters, intended to target heavy vehicle exhaust, are costly and can trigger a mechanical process called regeneration which can cause an engine to shut down. Bachus noted that the EPA has already approved exemptions for short haul vehicles used by the military and construction sector, and said it should do the same for fire and rescue vehicles.

"The EPA should listen more closely to the people being affected before it issues costly and

even counterproductive rules," said Bachus.

The request for the exemption is supported by the Southeastern Association of Fire Chiefs. Congressman Bachus is a member of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus.

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