



# Assistance to Firefighters Program: Distribution of Fire Grant Funding

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## Summary

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program, also known as fire grants or the FIRE Act grant program, was established by Title XVII of the FY2001 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 106-398). Currently administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the program provides federal grants directly to local fire departments and unaffiliated Emergency Medical Services (EMS) organizations to help address a variety of equipment, training, and other firefighter-related and EMS needs. A related program is the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Firefighters (SAFER) program, which provides grants for hiring, recruiting, and retaining firefighters.

The fire grant program is now in its 11<sup>th</sup> year. The Fire Act statute was reauthorized in 2004 (Title XXXVI of P.L. 108-375) and provides overall guidelines on how fire grant money should be distributed. There is no set geographical formula for the distribution of fire grants—fire departments throughout the nation apply, and award decisions are made by a peer panel based on the merits of the application and the needs of the community. However, the law does require that fire grants be distributed to a diverse mix of fire departments, with respect to type of department (paid, volunteer, or combination), geographic location, and type of community served (e.g., urban, suburban, or rural).

The Administration's FY2011 budget proposed \$305 million for AFG and \$305 million for SAFER. H.R. 1, the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011, as introduced on February 11, 2011, would have provided \$300 million to AFG and zero funding for SAFER. However, on February 16, 2011, H.Amdt. 223 (offered by Representative Pascrell and agreed to by the House by a vote of 318-113) restored AFG to \$390 million and SAFER to \$420 million (the FY2010 levels). H.R. 1 was passed by the House on February 18, 2011. S.Amdt. 149 to H.R. 1—which was rejected by the full Senate on March 9, 2011—would have funded AFG at \$405 million and SAFER at \$405 million. The Department of Defense and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 112-10) funds AFG at \$405 million and SAFER at \$405 million.

The Administration's FY2012 budget proposed \$670 million for firefighter assistance, including \$250 million for AFG and \$420 million for SAFER. According to the budget proposal, the request would fund 2,200 firefighter positions and approximately 5,000 AFG grants.

On March 10, 2011, S. 550, the Fire Grants Authorization Act of 2011 was introduced into the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress. Previously in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, reauthorization legislation for AFG and SAFER was passed by the House, but was not passed by the Senate. Debate over the reauthorization reflected a competition for funding between career/urban/suburban departments and volunteer/rural departments. The urgency of this debate was heightened by the proposed reduction of overall AFG funding in FY2011, and the economic downturn in many local communities increasingly hard pressed to allocate funding for their local fire departments.

On February 15, 2011, the Firefighting Investment, Renewal, and Employment Act or FIRE Act (H.R. 716) was introduced to authorize \$210 million for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2016 for competitive grants for modifying, upgrading, or constructing nonfederal fire stations.

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## Background

Firefighting activities are traditionally the responsibility of states and local communities. As such, funding for firefighters is provided mostly by state and local governments. During the 1990s, shortfalls in state and local budgets, coupled with increased responsibilities of local fire departments, led many in the fire community to call for additional financial support from the federal government. Although federally funded training programs existed (and continue to exist) through the National Fire Academy, and although federal money was available to first responders for counterterrorism training and equipment through the Department of Justice,<sup>1</sup> there did not exist a dedicated program, exclusively for firefighters, which provided federal money directly to local fire departments to help address a wide variety of equipment, training, and other firefighter-related needs.

## Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program

During the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, many in the fire community asserted that local fire departments require and deserve greater support from the federal government. The Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG), also known as fire grants or the FIRE Act grant program, was established by Title XVII of the FY2001 Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 106-398).<sup>2</sup> Currently administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the program provides federal grants directly to local fire departments and unaffiliated Emergency Medical Services (EMS) organizations to help address a variety of equipment, training, and other firefighter-related and EMS needs.

## First Reauthorization

On October 28, 2004, the President signed the FY2005 Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 108-375). Title XXXVI of P.L. 108-375 is the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program Reauthorization Act of 2004, which reauthorized the fire grant program through FY2009. **Table 1** provides a summary of key provisions of the first reauthorization.

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<sup>1</sup> For a list of federal programs providing assistance to state and local first responders, see CRS Report R40246, *Department of Homeland Security Assistance to States and Localities: A Summary and Issues for the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress*, by Shawn Reese.

<sup>2</sup> “Firefighter assistance” is codified as section 33 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act (15 U.S.C. 2229).

**Table I. Major Provisions of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program Reauthorization Act of 2004**

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Grant recipient limits:
populations over 1 million—lesser of \$2.75 million or 0.5% of total appropriation
populations of 500K to 1 million—\$1.75 million
populations under 500K—\$1 million
no single grant can exceed 0.5% of total funds appropriated for a single fiscal year
DHS can waive the funding limits for populations up to 1 million in instances of extraordinary need; however the lesser of \$2.75 million or 0.5% limit cannot be waived
Nonfederal match requirements:
20% for populations over 50K
10% for populations 20K to 50K
5% for populations less than 20K
No match requirement for non-fire department prevention and firefighter safety grants
Authorized for five years:
FY2005—\$900 million
FY2006—\$950 million
FY2007—\$1 billion
FY2008—\$1 billion
FY2009—\$1 billion
Expands grant eligibility to emergency medical service squads, not less than 3.5% of fire grant money for EMS, but no more than 2% for nonaffiliated EMS
Provides grants for firefighter health and safety R&D
Requires the USFA Administrator to convene an annual meeting of non-federal fire service experts to recommend criteria for awarding grants and administrative changes
Requires fire service peer review of grant applications
Requires the USFA, in conjunction with the National Fire Protection Association, to conduct a \$300,000, 18-month study on the fire grant program and the need for federal assistance to state and local communities to fund firefighting and emergency response activities

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**Source:** Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program Reauthorization Act of 2004, Section XXXVI of P.L. 108-375, FY2005 Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act.

## **Second Reauthorization**

On March 10, 2011, S. 550, the Fire Grants Authorization Act of 2011, was introduced by Senator Lieberman, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. Previously in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, reauthorization legislation for AFG and SAFER was passed by the House, but was not passed by the Senate. S. 550 is identical to the Senate reauthorization bill in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, except that the authorization and reporting dates have been extended by a year.

## Activity in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress

The current authorization of AFG expired on September 30, 2009; the authorization of SAFER expired September 30, 2010. On July 8, 2009, the House Committee on Science and Technology, Subcommittee on Technology & Innovation, held a hearing on the reauthorization of the FIRE grant programs (both AFG and SAFER).<sup>3</sup> Testimony was heard from FEMA and many of the major fire service organizations including the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC), and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

A major issue surrounding the fire grant reauthorization is whether the current distribution of fire grant funds should be altered. Under current law, the majority of funding goes to rural and volunteer fire departments. This is the case because individual fire departments throughout the nation apply directly for funding, and there are many more volunteer and rural fire departments than career and urban/suburban fire departments.<sup>4</sup> In general, career departments tend to protect the more densely populated urban and suburban areas, while volunteer departments tend to protect more rural areas.

Testimony presented by the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), representing career (paid) firefighters, argued that under current law, “the overwhelming majority of FIRE grants are awarded to fire departments that protect a relatively small percentage of the population.”<sup>5</sup> According to IAFF, a greater proportion of funding should go to career fire departments protecting the more densely populated suburban and urban areas, and suggested the following changes in the fire act statute:

- professional, volunteer, and combination departments should each be guaranteed at least 30% of total grant funding each year (under current statute, volunteer and combination departments must receive *no less* than 55% of funding; in practice career departments have received about 20% of AFG funding);
- funding caps for a single grant should be raised to \$10 million for communities of 1 million population or more, \$5 million for communities of 500,000 or more, \$2 million for communities of 100,000 or more, and \$1 million for communities with populations under 100,000 (current statutory caps are \$2.75 million for populations over 1 million, \$1.75 million for populations over 500,000, and \$1 million for populations under 500,000); and
- the local match requirement for fire grants should be set at 15% for all applicants, with DHS having the authority to waive the match requirement for needy departments (the current statutory matching requirements are 20% for

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<sup>3</sup> See [http://science.house.gov/publications/hearings\\_markup\\_details.aspx?NewsID=2539](http://science.house.gov/publications/hearings_markup_details.aspx?NewsID=2539).

<sup>4</sup> According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), there are an estimated 30,185 fire departments in the United States (2007 data). Of those, 7.5% are career departments, 5.8% are mostly career, 16.5% are mostly volunteer, and 70.1% are all volunteer. Most career firefighters (74%) are in communities that protect 25,000 or more people, while most volunteer firefighters (95%) are in departments that protect fewer than 25,000, and more than half are located in small, rural departments that protect fewer than 2,500 people.

<sup>5</sup> Kevin O’Connor, Assistant to the General President, International Association of Fire Fighters, testimony before the House Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation, Committee on Science and Technology, July 8, 2009, p. 3, <http://gop.science.house.gov/Media/hearings/ets09/july8/oconnor.pdf>.

populations over 50,000, 10% for populations over 20,000, and 5% for populations less than 20,000).<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand, testimony from the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) stated that its main priority for reauthorization of AFG (as well as SAFER) is to extend the programs without substantial changes, and that “the programs are well-run, distributing funding in an efficient manner to the most deserving awardees.”<sup>7</sup> NVFC argued that volunteer departments are concentrated in rural communities with smaller tax bases and higher poverty rates, that “DHS needs assessments have consistently shown that equipment training and apparatus needs are most acute in volunteer departments,”<sup>8</sup> and that since 2001 DHS first responder grants for terrorism and disaster response have predominantly gone to urban areas.

Meanwhile, other suggested reauthorization changes to the AFG statute made by the July 8 hearing witnesses included:

- establish DHS waiver authority for the existing local match requirement for economically challenged jurisdictions (IAFC);
- establish centers of excellence in fire safety research (IAFC);
- allow larger grants for regional projects (IAFC);
- eliminate the cost-share requirement for fire departments in the Fire Prevention and Firefighter Safety grant program (NFPA and IAFF);
- designate a minimum of 5% of funding for fire service-based emergency medical services (NFPA);
- utilize funds for training and equipment to meet the latest applicable national voluntary consensus standards available at the time of application (NFPA); and
- make state training agencies (e.g., state fire academies) eligible for AFG funding (NVFC).

As manifested in the July 8 hearing, debate over the AFG reauthorization reflected a competition for funding primarily between career/urban/suburban departments and volunteer/rural departments. The urgency of this debate was heightened by reductions in FY2010 AFG funding and by the economic downturn in many local communities increasingly hard pressed to allocate funding for their local fire departments.

### ***House Reauthorization Bill***

On October 13, 2009, H.R. 3791, the Fire Grants Reauthorization Act of 2009, was introduced by Representative Mitchell. The legislation reflected an agreement reached among the major fire service organizations on the reauthorization language. H.R. 3791 was referred to the House Committee on Science and Technology, and approved (amended) by the Subcommittee on

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Jack Carriger, First Vice Chairman of the National Volunteer Fire Council, testimony before the House Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation, Committee on Science and Technology, July 8, 2009, p. 3, [http://democrats.science.house.gov/Media/file/Commdocs/hearings/2009/Tech/8jul/Carriger\\_Testimony.pdf](http://democrats.science.house.gov/Media/file/Commdocs/hearings/2009/Tech/8jul/Carriger_Testimony.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

Technology and Innovation on October 14, 2009, and by the full committee on October 21, 2009. H.R. 3791 was reported (amended) by the committee on November 7, 2009 (H.Rept. 111-333, Part I). H.R. 3791 was amended and passed by the House on November 18, 2009. Adopted amendments included directing DHS to conduct a survey of fire department compliance with firefighter safety standards; requiring DHS to give added consideration to applications from areas with high unemployment; making river rescue organizations eligible for funding; expanding AFG scope to include equipment that reduces water use; and prohibiting earmarking of funds appropriated under the act.

H.R. 3791, as passed by the House, would have authorized AFG at a level of \$1 billion per year through FY2014 and included the following major provisions:

- *Grant Money Distribution*—directs that grant money should be allocated (to the extent that there are eligible applicants) as follows: 25% of AFG funding to career fire departments; 25% to volunteer fire departments; 25% to combination fire departments; 10% (minimum) for fire prevention, safety, and research grants; 2% (maximum) for volunteer non-fire service EMS and rescue; 3% (maximum) for fire service training academies; and 10% to be competitive between career, volunteer and combination departments;
- *Grant Caps*—sets maximum individual grant levels at \$9 million for jurisdictions with populations over 2.5 million, \$6 million for populations between 1 million and 2.5 million, \$3 million for populations between 500,000 and 1 million, \$2 million for populations between 100,000 and 500,000, and \$1 million for populations under 100,000;
- *Matching Requirements*—keeps the existing 5% matching requirement for communities of 20K or less, sets the matching requirement for all other jurisdictions at 10%, and allows an economic hardship waiver whereby in “exceptional circumstances” DHS may waive or reduce the matching requirements;
- *Maintenance of Expenditures*—amends the existing maintenance of expenditures provision to require applicants to maintain budgets at 80% of the average over the past two years, also allows an economic hardship waiver whereby in “exceptional circumstances” DHS may waive or reduce the maintenance of expenditures requirements;
- *Fire Prevention, Research, and Safety Grants*—increases available funding from 5% to 10% of total, raises grant maximum from \$1 million to \$1.5 million, eliminates the matching requirement for fire departments, and prohibits any funding to the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN);
- *University Fire Safety Research Centers*—as part of the fire prevention, research, and safety grants, authorizes DHS to establish no more than three university fire safety research centers with funding of any one center at not more than \$2 million per fiscal year;
- *State Fire Training Academies*—allows DHS to award up to 3% of grant funding to state fire training academies, with individual grants not to exceed \$1 million;



- *Voluntary Consensus Standards*—directs that grants used for training should be limited to training that complies with applicable national voluntary consensus standards, unless a waiver has been granted; and
- *Survey and Task Force on Firefighter Safety*—directs DHS to conduct a nationwide survey to assess whether fire departments are in compliance with the national voluntary consensus standards for staffing, training, safe operations, personal protective equipment, and fitness; establishes a Task Force to Enhance Firefighter Safety to make recommendations to Congress on ways to increase compliance with firefighter safety standards.

H.R. 3791 also reauthorized the SAFER grant program at a level of \$1.196 billion per year through FY2014. The legislation would have modified the SAFER grant program by shortening the grant period to three years, establishing a 20% local matching requirement for each year, removing the existing federal funding cap per hired firefighter, making national organizations eligible for recruitment and retention funds, and allowing DHS in the case of economic hardship to waive cost share requirements, the three-year grant period, and/or maintenance of expenditure requirements.

### *Senate Reauthorization Bill*

On April 27, 2010, S. 3267, the Fire Grants Reauthorization Act of 2010, was introduced and referred to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. On April 28, the committee ordered S. 3267 to be reported with an amendment favorably. S. 3267 was reported on July 28, 2010 (S.Rept. 111-235). The Senate bill, while similar to the House bill, had a higher nonfederal match requirement for communities over 50K and higher match requirements for fire prevention and safety grants. Regarding SAFER, the Senate bill had a higher match requirement for hiring grants and would have continued to require applicants to retain hired firefighters for at least one year after the grant expires (unless a waiver is obtained). For both AFG and SAFER, certain changes to current law made by the Senate bill would sunset on October 1, 2015. **Table 2** shows a comparison of selected provisions in the Senate bill (S. 550, virtually identical to S. 3267 and introduced into the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress), the House bill passed by the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, and current law (15 U.S.C. 2229 and 15 U.S.C. 2229a).

**Table 2. Comparison of Selected Provisions in Fire Grant Reauthorization**

<b>Current Law (15 U.S.C. 2229 and 15 U.S.C. 2229a)</b>	<b>H.R. 3791 as passed by House in 111<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	<b>S. 550 as introduced in 112<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>
<i>Grant money distribution</i>		
volunteer and combination fire departments shall receive a proportion of the total grant funding that is not less than the proportion of the U.S. population that those departments protect	25% to career fire departments 25% to volunteer fire departments 25% to combination fire departments 10% competitive between career, volunteer, and combination departments	no less than 25% to career fire departments no less than 25% to volunteer fire departments no less than 25% to combination and paid-on-call fire departments
5% (minimum) to fire prevention and safety grants	10% (minimum) to fire prevention and safety grants (includes fire safety research centers)	10% (minimum) to fire prevention and safety grants (includes fire safety research centers)
3.5% (minimum) to EMS provided by	2% (maximum) to volunteer non-fire	3.5% (minimum) to EMS provided by

<b>Current Law (15 U.S.C. 2229 and 15 U.S.C. 2229a)</b>	<b>H.R. 3791 as passed by House in 111<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	<b>S. 550 as introduced in 112<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>
fire departments and nonaffiliated EMS organizations	service EMS	fire departments and nonaffiliated EMS organizations
2% (maximum) to nonaffiliated EMS organizations	3% (maximum) to State fire training academies, no more than 1 grant and \$1 million per state in a fiscal year	2% (maximum) to nonaffiliated EMS organizations  3% (maximum) to State training academies, no more than \$1 million per state academy in any fiscal year  Joint or Regional applications—two or more entities may submit an application to fund a joint or regional program or initiative, including acquisition of shared equipment or vehicles
<i>Grant recipient limits</i>		
populations over 1 million—lesser of \$2.75 million or 0.5% of total appropriation	\$9 million—over 2.5m population \$6 million—1m to 2.5m population \$3 million—500K to 1m population	\$9 million—over 2.5m population \$6 million—1m to 2.5m population \$3 million—500K to 1m population
populations of 500K to 1 million—\$1.75 million	\$2 million—100 to 500K population	\$2 million—100 to 500K population
populations under 500K—\$1 million	\$1 million—under 100K population	\$1 million—under 100K population
no single grant can exceed 0.5% of total funds appropriated for a single fiscal year		
DHS can waive the funding limits for populations up to 1 million in instances of extraordinary need; however the lesser of \$2.75 million or 0.5% limit cannot be waived	DHS can waive funding limits for populations up to 2.5 million in instances of extraordinary need	FEMA may not award a grant exceeding 1% of all available grant funds, unless FEMA determines extraordinary need
<i>Nonfederal match requirements</i>		
20% for populations over 50K 10% for populations 20K to 50K 5% for populations less than 20K	10% for populations over 20K 5% for populations under 20K	15% for populations over 50K 10% for populations 20K to 50K 5% for populations under 20K
No match requirement for non-fire department prevention and firefighter safety grants	No match requirement for all fire prevention and firefighter safety grants	5% match required for fire prevention and safety grants
<i>Maintenance of expenditures</i>		
requires applicants to maintain expenditures at the same level as the average over the preceding two fiscal years	requires applicants to maintain expenditures at or above 80% of the average over the preceding two fiscal years	requires applicants to maintain expenditures at or above 80% of the average over the preceding two fiscal years
<i>Economic hardship waivers</i>		
no economic hardship waivers available	waivers available for nonfederal matching and maintenance of expenditures requirements, DHS will develop economic hardship waiver criteria in consultation with experts and interests representing the fire	waivers available for nonfederal matching and maintenance of expenditures requirements, FEMA will develop economic hardship waiver guidelines considering unemployment rates, percentages of

<b>Current Law (15 U.S.C. 2229 and 15 U.S.C. 2229a)</b>	<b>H.R. 3791 as passed by House in 111<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	<b>S. 550 as introduced in 112<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>
	service and State and local governments	individuals eligible to receive food stamps, and other factors as appropriate.
<i>Authorization</i>		
FY2005—\$900 million	FY2010—\$1 billion	FY2012—\$950 million
FY2006—\$950 million	FY2011—\$1 billion	for each of FY2013 – FY2016, an amount equal to the amount authorized the previous fiscal year, increased by the percentage by which the Consumer Price Index for the previous fiscal year exceeds the preceding year.
FY2007—\$1 billion	FY2012—\$1 billion	
FY2008—\$1 billion	FY2013—\$1 billion	
FY2009—\$1 billion	FY2014—\$1 billion	
<i>SAFER</i>		
grant period is 4 years, grantees are required to retain for at least 1 year beyond the termination of their grants those firefighters hired under the grant	shortens the grant period to three years, grant recipients are required to retain for at least the entire 3 years of the grant period those firefighters hired under the grant	shortens the grant period to three years, grantees are required to retain for at least 1 year beyond the termination of their grants those firefighters hired under the grant
year 1—10% local match year 2—20% local match year 3—50% local match year 4—70% local match	establishes a 20% local matching requirement for each year	establishes a 25% local matching requirement for each year
total funding over 4 years for hiring a firefighter may not exceed \$100K, adjusted annually for inflation	removes the existing federal funding cap per hired firefighter	the amount of funding provided for hiring a firefighter in any fiscal year may not exceed 75% of the usual annual cost of a first-year firefighter in that department
state, local, and Indian tribal governments eligible for recruitment and retention funds	additionally makes national organizations eligible for recruitment and retention funds	additionally makes national organizations eligible for recruitment and retention funds
	allows DHS in the case of economic hardship to waive cost share requirements, the required retention period, the prohibition on supplanting local funds, and/or maintenance of expenditure requirements	allows DHS in the case of economic hardship to waive cost share requirements, the required retention period, the prohibition on supplanting local funds, and/or maintenance of expenditure requirements
authorized for 7 years starting at \$1 billion in FY2004, ending at \$1.194 billion in FY2010	reauthorizes the SAFER grant program FY2010 through FY2014 at a level of \$1.196 billion per year	reauthorizes the SAFER grant program FY2012 through FY2016 at a level of \$950 million per year, with each year adjusted for inflation

**Source:** Compiled by CRS.

## Appropriations

From FY2001 through FY2003, the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program (as part of USFA/FEMA) received its primary appropriation through the VA-HUD-Independent Agencies Appropriation Act. In FY2004, the Assistance to Firefighters Program began to receive its annual appropriation through the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Homeland

Security. Within the DHS/FEMA budget, the firefighter assistance account (which includes both AFG and SAFER) is located within State and Local Programs as part of the State and Regional Preparedness Program.

The fire grant program is in its 11<sup>th</sup> year. **Table 3** shows the appropriations history for firefighter assistance, including AFG, SAFER, and the Fire Station Construction Grants (SCG) provided in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Over \$5.2 billion has been appropriated to the AFG program since FY2001, its initial year. **Table 4** shows recent and proposed appropriated funding for the AFG and SAFER grant programs.

**Table 3. Appropriations for Firefighter Assistance, FY2001-FY2011**

	<b>AFG</b>	<b>SAFER</b>	<b>SCG<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Total</b>
FY2001	\$100 million			<b>\$100 million</b>
FY2002	\$360 million			<b>\$360 million</b>
FY2003	\$745 million			<b>\$745 million</b>
FY2004	\$746 million			<b>\$746 million</b>
FY2005	\$650 million	\$65 million		<b>\$715 million</b>
FY2006	\$539 million	\$109 million		<b>\$648 million</b>
FY2007	\$547 million	\$115 million		<b>\$662 million</b>
FY2008	\$560 million	\$190 million		<b>\$750 million</b>
FY2009	\$565 million	\$210 million	\$210 million	<b>\$985 million</b>
FY2010	\$390 million	\$420 million		<b>\$810 million</b>
FY2011	\$405 million	\$405 million		<b>\$810 million</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5.607 billion</b>	<b>\$1.514 billion</b>	<b>\$210 million</b>	<b>\$7.331 billion</b>

a. Assistance to Firefighters Fire Station Construction Grants (SCG) grants were funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (P.L. 111-5).

**Table 4. Recent and Proposed Appropriations for Firefighter Assistance**  
(millions of dollars)

	<b>FY2009 (Admin. request)</b>	<b>FY2009 (P.L. 110- 329)</b>	<b>FY2010 (Admin. request)</b>	<b>FY2010 (P.L. 111- 83)</b>	<b>FY2011 (Admin. request)</b>	<b>FY2011 (P.L. 112- 10)</b>	<b>FY2012 (Admin. Request)</b>
FIRE Grants (AFG)	300	565	170	390	305	405	250
SAFER Grants	0	210	420	420	305	405	420
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>810</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>810</b>	<b>670</b>

## FY2010

For FY2010, the Obama Administration proposed \$170 million for AFG, a 70% decrease from the FY2009 level, and \$420 million for SAFER, double the amount appropriated in FY2009. The

total amount requested for firefighter assistance (AFG and SAFER) was \$590 million, a 24% decrease from FY2009. The FY2010 budget proposal stated that the firefighter assistance grant process “will give priority to applications that enhance capabilities for terrorism response and other major incidents.”<sup>9</sup>

The House FY2010 Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill (H.R. 2892; H.Rept. 111-157) provided \$800 million for firefighter assistance, including \$380 million for AFG and \$420 million for SAFER. Although the SAFER level matched the Administration’s request, the AFG level was more than twice what the Administration proposed. According to the committee report, the Administration’s request of \$170 million for AFG “is woefully inadequate given the vast needs of fire departments across the nation for equipment.” The committee directed FEMA to continue granting funds to local fire departments, include the United States Fire Administration in the grant decision process, and maintain an all-hazard focus while prohibiting the limiting of eligible activities including wellness.

The House passed H.R. 2892 on June 24, 2009. During floor consideration of H.R. 2892, the House approved a manager’s amendment that added \$10 million to the AFG account. Therefore, the House-passed total for AFG was \$390 million.

The Senate FY2010 Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill (S. 1298; S.Rept. 111-31) provided \$800 million for firefighter assistance, including \$380 million for AFG and \$420 million for SAFER. The Appropriations Committee directed DHS to continue funding applications according to local priorities and priorities established by the United States Fire Administration, and to continue direct funding to fire departments and the peer review process.

The Senate passed H.R. 2892 on July 9, 2009. During floor consideration, the Senate adopted an amendment (S.Amdt. 1458) that added \$10 million to the AFG account. Therefore, the Senate-passed total for AFG was also \$390 million.

The conference report for the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2010 (H.Rept. 111-298) was passed by the House on October 15. H.Rept. 111-298 provided \$390 million for AFG and \$420 million for SAFER, identical to the levels in both the House- and Senate-passed H.R. 2892. The conferees directed FEMA to continue the present practice of funding applications according to local priorities and those established by the USFA, to maintain an all-hazards focus, to grant funds for eligible activities in accordance with the authorizing statute, and to continue the current grant application and review process as specified in the House report. The conference report was passed by the House on October 15, by the Senate on October 20, and signed into law, P.L. 111-83, on October 28, 2009.

Meanwhile, on December 16, 2009, the House considered legislation intended to create jobs and passed the S.Amdt. to H.R. 2847, which would provide \$500 million in additional FY2010 funding for SAFER. H.R. 2847 directs that any unused funds may be transferred to AFG after notification to the House and Senate appropriations committees.

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<sup>9</sup> Office of Management and Budget, Appendix: Budget of the United States Government, FY2010, p. 547.

## **FY2011**

The Administration's FY2011 budget proposed \$305 million for AFG (a 22% decrease from the FY2010 level) and \$305 million for SAFER (a 27% decrease). The total amount requested for firefighter assistance (AFG and SAFER) was \$610 million, a 25% decrease from FY2010. The FY2011 budget proposal stated that the firefighter assistance grant process "will give priority to applications that enhance capabilities for terrorism response and other major incidents."<sup>10</sup>

On June 24, 2010, the House Subcommittee on Homeland Security Appropriations approved \$840 million for firefighter assistance, including \$420 million for AFG and \$420 million for SAFER.

On July 19, 2010, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved \$810 million for firefighter assistance (including \$390 million for AFG and \$420 million for SAFER), the same level as FY2010 and 33% more than the Administration proposal. In the bill report (S.Rept. 111-222), the committee directed DHS to continue funding applications according to local priorities and priorities established by the United States Fire Administration, and to continue direct funding to fire departments and the peer review process. The committee also directed FEMA to submit the U.S. Fire Service Needs Assessment, and to brief the committee regarding the implementation of the recommendations of the recent GAO report (GAO-10-64) on additional actions which would improve the grants process.

H.R. 1, the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011, as introduced on February 11, 2011, would have provided \$300 million to AFG and zero funding for SAFER. However, on February 16, 2011, H.Amdt. 223 (offered by Representative Pascrell and agreed to by the House by a vote of 318-113) restored AFG to \$390 million and SAFER to \$420 million (the FY2010 levels). H.R. 1 was passed by the House on February 18, 2011. S.Amdt. 149 to H.R. 1—which was rejected by the full Senate on March 9, 2011—would have funded AFG at \$405 million and SAFER at \$405 million.

The Department of Defense and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 112-10) funds AFG at \$405 million and SAFER at \$405 million.

## **FY2012**

The Administration's FY2012 budget proposed \$670 million for firefighter assistance, including \$250 million for AFG and \$420 million for SAFER. According to the budget proposal, the request would fund 2,200 firefighter positions and approximately 5,000 AFG grants. The FY2012 budget proposal stated that the firefighter assistance grant process "will give priority to applications that enhance capabilities for terrorism response and other major incidents."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Office of Management and Budget, Appendix: Budget of the United States Government, FY2011, p. 557.

<sup>11</sup> Office of Management and Budget, Appendix: Budget of the United States Government, FY2012, p. 538.

## **Fire Station Construction Grants in the ARRA**

Since its inception, the traditional fire grant program has provided money specifically for health and safety related modifications of fire stations, but has not funded major upgrades, renovations, or construction. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 (P.L. 111-5) provided an additional \$210 million in firefighter assistance grants for modifying, upgrading, or constructing state and local non-federal fire stations, provided that 5% be set aside for program administration and provided that no grant shall exceed \$15 million. The conference report (H.Rept. 111-16) cited DHS estimates that this spending would create 2,000 jobs. The ARRA also included a provision (section 603) that waived the matching requirement for SAFER grants funded by appropriations in FY2009 and FY2010.

The application period for ARRA Assistance to Firefighters Fire Station Construction Grants (SCG) opened on June 11 and closed on July 10, 2009. There is no cost share requirement for SCG grants. Eligible applicants are non-federal fire departments that provide fire protection services to local communities. Ineligible applicants include federal fire departments, EMS or rescue organizations, airport fire departments, for-profit fire departments, fire training centers, emergency communications centers, auxiliaries and fire service organizations or associations, and search and rescue teams or similar organizations without fire suppression responsibilities.

DHS/FEMA received 6,025 SCG applications for \$9.9 billion in federal funds.<sup>12</sup> As of October 1, 2010, 119 SCG grants were awarded, totaling \$207.461 million to fire departments within the United States. A complete list of SCG awards is available at <http://www.firegrantsupport.com/content/html/scg/Awards09.aspx/>.

On February 15, 2011, the Firefighting Investment, Renewal, and Employment Act or FIRE Act (H.R. 716) was introduced to authorize \$210 million for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2016 for competitive grants for modifying, upgrading, or constructing nonfederal fire stations.

## **SAFER Grants**

In response to concerns over the adequacy of firefighter staffing, the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress enacted the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Act as Section 1057 of the FY2004 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 108-136; signed into law November 24, 2003). The SAFER grant program is codified as Section 34 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2229a). The SAFER Act authorizes grants to career, volunteer, and combination fire departments for the purpose of increasing the number of firefighters to help communities meet industry minimum standards and attain 24-hour staffing to provide adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards. Also authorized are grants to volunteer fire departments for activities related to the recruitment and retention of volunteers. P.L. 108-136 authorizes over one billion dollars per year through FY2010 for SAFER.

Two types of grants are authorized by the SAFER Act: hiring grants and recruitment and retention grants. *Hiring grants* cover a four-year term and are cost shared with the local jurisdiction. According to the statute, the federal share shall not exceed 90% in the first year of the grant, 80%

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<sup>12</sup> Detailed SCG application statistics are available at <http://www.firegrantsupport.com/docs/2009AFSCGAppStats.pdf>.

in the second year, 50% in the third year, and 30% in the fourth year. The grantee must commit to retaining the firefighter or firefighters hired with the SAFER grant for at least one additional year after the federal money expires. Total federal funding for hiring a firefighter over the four-year grant period may not exceed \$100,000, although that total may be adjusted for inflation. While the majority of hiring grants will be awarded to career and combination fire departments, the SAFER Act specifies that 10% of the total SAFER appropriation be awarded to volunteer or majority-volunteer departments for the hiring of personnel.

Additionally, at least 10% of the total SAFER appropriation is set aside for *recruitment and retention grants*, which are available to volunteer and combination fire departments for activities related to the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters. Also eligible for recruitment and retention grants are local and statewide organizations that represent the interests of volunteer firefighters. No local cost sharing is required for recruitment and retention grants.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-5) included a provision (section 603) that waives the matching requirement for SAFER grants in FY2009 and FY2010. Additionally, the FY2009 Supplemental Appropriations Act (P.L. 111-32) included a provision (section 605) giving the Secretary of Homeland Security authority to waive certain limitations and restrictions in the SAFER statute. For grants awarded in FY2009 and FY2010, waivers will permit grantees to use SAFER funds to rehire laid-off firefighters and fill positions eliminated through attrition, will allow grants to extend longer than the current five year duration, and will permit the amount of funding per position at levels exceeding the current limit of \$100,000.

The Department of Defense and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 112-10) contained language that removes cost-share requirements and allows SAFER grants to be used to rehire laid-off firefighters and fill positions eliminated through attrition. However, P.L. 112-10 did not remove the requirement that SAFER grants fund a firefighter position for four years, with the fifth year funded wholly by the grant recipient. The law also did not waive the cap of \$100K per firefighter hired by a SAFER grant.

For more information on the SAFER program, see CRS Report RL33375, *Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response: The SAFER Grant Program*, by Lennard G. Kruger.

## **Program Evaluation**

On May 13, 2003, the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) released the first independent evaluation of the Assistance to Firefighters Program. Conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Leadership Development Academy Executive Potential Program, the survey study presented a number of recommendations and concluded overall that the program was "highly effective in improving the readiness and capabilities of firefighters across the nation."<sup>13</sup> Another evaluation of the fire grant program was released by the DHS Office of Inspector General in September 2003. The report concluded that the program "succeeded in achieving a balanced distribution of funding through a competitive grant process,"<sup>14</sup> and made a number of specific recommendations for improving the program.

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<sup>13</sup> For full report see <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/affgp-fy01-usda-report.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspections, Evaluations, and Special Reviews, "A Review of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program," OIG-ISP-01-03, September 2003, p. 3. Available at <http://www.dhs.gov/> (continued...)



At the request of DHS, the National Academy of Public Administration conducted a study to help identify potential new strategic directions for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program and to provide advice on how to effectively plan, manage, and measure program accomplishments. Released in April 2007, the report recommended consideration of new strategic directions related to national preparedness, prevention vs. response, social equity, regional cooperation, and emergency medical response. According to the report, the “challenge for the AFG program will be to support a gradual shift in direction without losing major strengths of its current management approach—including industry driven priority setting and its well-respected peer review process.”<sup>15</sup>

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-161), in the accompanying Joint Explanatory Statement, directed the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to review the application and award process for fire and SAFER grants. Additionally, FEMA was directed to peer review grant applications that best address the program’s priorities and criteria as established by FEMA and the fire service. Those criteria necessary for peer-review must be included in the grant application package. Applicants whose grant applications are not reviewed must receive an official notification detailing why the application did not meet the criteria for review. Applications must be rank-ordered, and funded following the rank order.

In October 2009, GAO sent a report to Congress finding that FEMA has met most statutory requirements for awarding fire grants.<sup>16</sup> GAO recommended that FEMA establish a procedure to track EMS awards, ensure that grant priorities are better aligned with application questions and scoring values, and provide specific feedback to rejected applicants.

## **Distribution of Fire Grants**

The FIRE Act statute prescribes 14 different purposes for which fire grant money *may* be used (see 15 U.S.C. 2229(b)(3)). These are: hiring firefighters; training firefighters; creating rapid intervention teams; certifying fire inspectors; establishing wellness and fitness programs; funding emergency medical services; acquiring firefighting vehicles; acquiring firefighting equipment; acquiring personal protective equipment; modifying fire stations for health and safety; enforcing fire codes; funding fire prevention programs; educating the public about arson prevention and detection; and providing incentives for the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters. The DHS has the discretion to decide which of those purposes will be funded for a given grant year. Since the program commenced in FY2001, the majority of fire grant funding has been used by fire departments to purchase firefighting equipment, personal protective equipment, and firefighting vehicles.

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(...continued)

[xoig/assets/mgmt/rpts/OIG\\_Review\\_Fire\\_Assist.pdf](http://www.gao.gov/assets/mgmt/rpts/OIG_Review_Fire_Assist.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> National Academy of Public Administration, *Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program: Assessing Performance*, April 2007, p. xvii. Available at [http://www.napawash.org/pc\\_management\\_studies/Fire\\_Grants\\_Report\\_April2007.pdf](http://www.napawash.org/pc_management_studies/Fire_Grants_Report_April2007.pdf).

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Fire Grants: FEMA Has Met Most Requirements for Awarding Fire Grants, but Additional Actions Would Improve Its Grant Process*, GAO-10-64, October 2009, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d1064.pdf>.

Eligible applicants are limited primarily to fire departments (defined as an agency or organization that has a formally recognized arrangement with a state, local, or tribal authority to provide fire suppression, fire prevention and rescue services to a population within a fixed geographical area). Emergency Medical Services (EMS) activities are eligible for fire grants, including a limited number (no more than 2% of funds allocated) to EMS organizations not affiliated with hospitals. Additionally, a separate competition is held for fire prevention and firefighter safety research and development grants, which are available to national, state, local, or community fire prevention or safety organizations (including, but not limited to, fire departments). For official program guidelines, frequently-asked-questions, the latest awards announcements, and other information, see the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program web page at <http://www.firegrantsupport.com/>.

The FIRE Act statute provides overall guidelines on how fire grant money will be distributed and administered. The law directs that volunteer and combination departments receive a proportion of the total grant funding that is not less than the proportion of the U.S. population that those departments protect (34% for combination, 21% for all-volunteer). The Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Title XXXVI of P.L. 108-375) raised award caps and lowered nonfederal matching requirements (based on recipient community population), extended eligibility to nonaffiliated emergency medical services (i.e., ambulance services not affiliated with fire departments), and expanded the scope of grants to include firefighter safety R&D.

There is no set geographical formula for the distribution of fire grants—fire departments throughout the nation apply, and award decisions are made by a peer panel based on the merits of the application and the needs of the community. However, the law does require that fire grants should be distributed to a diverse mix of fire departments, with respect to type of department (paid, volunteer, or combination), geographic location, and type of community served (e.g., urban, suburban, or rural).<sup>17</sup> The Fire Act's implementing regulation provides that:

In a few cases, to fulfill our obligations under the law to make grants to a variety of departments, we may also make funding decisions using rank order as the preliminary basis, and then analyze the type of fire department (paid, volunteer, or combination fire departments), the size and character of the community it serves (urban, suburban, or rural), and/or the geographic location of the fire department. In these instances where we are making decisions based on geographic location, we will use States as the basic geographic unit.<sup>18</sup>

According to the FY2010 Program Guidance for the Assistance to Firefighters Program, career (paid) departments will compete against other career departments for up to 45% of the available funding, while volunteer and combination departments will compete for at least 55% of the available funding.<sup>19</sup> However, given that less than 10% of fire grant applications are historically received from career departments, funding levels are likely not to reach the 45% ceiling for career departments. Additionally, each fire department that applies is classified as either urban, suburban, or rural. In FY2006, 4.3% of the total number of fire grant awards went to urban areas,

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<sup>17</sup> 15 U.S.C. 2229(b)(9).

<sup>18</sup> 44 CFR Part 152.6(c).

<sup>19</sup> For the FY2010 round of awards, no less than 33% of AFG funds must be awarded to combination departments, and no less than 22% of AFG funds must be awarded to all-volunteer departments. See Department of Homeland Security, *Fiscal Year 2010 Assistance to Firefighters Grants: Guidance and Application Kit*, April 2010, p. 26.

17.8% to suburban areas, and 77.7% to rural areas. Of the total amount of federal funding awarded, 7.7% went to urban areas, 18.2% to suburban areas, and 73.9% to rural areas.<sup>20</sup>

Finally, in an effort to maximize the diversity of awardees, the geographic location of an applicant (using states as the basic geographic unit) is used as a deciding factor in cases where applicants have similar qualifications. **Table 5** shows a state-by-state breakdown of fire grant funding for FY2001 through FY2009, while **Table 6** shows a state-by-state breakdown of SAFER grant funding for FY2005 through FY2009. **Table 7** provides an in-depth look at the FY2009 fire grants, showing, for each state, the number of fire departments in each state,<sup>21</sup> the number of fire grant applications, the total amount requested, the total amount awarded, and the amount of funds awarded as a percentage of funds requested. As **Table 7** shows, the entire pool of fire department applicants received about 16% of the funds they requested in FY2009. This compares to 15% in FY2008, 16% in FY2007, 21% in FY2006, 22% in FY2005, 28% in FY2004, and 34% in FY2003. The downward trend reflects the fact that the number of applications and federal funds requested have trended upward over these years, while appropriations for the fire grant program have declined over the same period.

## Issues in the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress

Because the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress did not enact the Fire Grants Reauthorization Act, the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress may revisit the issue, and may consider whether and how to modify the reauthorization bills as passed by the House and reported by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress. On March 10, 2011, S. 550, the Fire Grants Authorization Act of 2011, was introduced. Debate over the AFG reauthorization has reflected a competition for funding between career/urban/suburban departments and volunteer/rural departments. The urgency of this debate could be heightened by possible reductions of overall AFG funding and the economic downturn in many local communities increasingly hard pressed to allocate funding for their local fire departments.

Meanwhile, the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress will consider the Administration's FY2012 request for AFG and SAFER. As is the case with many federal programs, concerns in the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress over the federal budget deficit could impact budget levels for AFG and SAFER. At the same time, firefighter assistance budgets will likely receive heightened scrutiny from the fire community, given the national economic downturn and local budgetary cutbacks that many fire departments are now facing.

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<sup>20</sup> Department of Homeland Security, Grant Programs Directorate, Grant Development and Administration Division, *Report on Fiscal Year 2006 Assistance to Firefighters Grants*, p. 11.

<sup>21</sup> The fire grant program sets a limit of up to three applications per fire department per year (a vehicle application, an application for operations and safety, and a regional application). Thus, the number of fire departments in a state plays a major factor in the number of fire grant applications submitted and the amount of total funding awarded within a given state. For example, because Pennsylvania has—by far—the largest number of fire departments, it is not surprising that it leads the nation in the number of fire grants applications and the amount of funding awarded.

**Table 5. State-by-State Distribution of Fire Grants, FY2001-FY2009**  
(millions of dollars)

	<b>FY01</b>	<b>FY02</b>	<b>FY03</b>	<b>FY04</b>	<b>FY05</b>	<b>FY06</b>	<b>FY07</b>	<b>FY08</b>	<b>FY09</b>	<b>Total</b>
AL	3.085	12.503	23.329	25.097	20.836	22.027	19.903	23.332	19.966	170.078
AK	1.303	2.641	5.242	2.522	3.111	0.754	2.454	0.990	0.935	19.952
AZ	1.37	3.6	7.490	9.808	7.905	4.041	4.932	5.440	4.716	49.302
AR	1.337	4.635	10.675	13.680	10.402	7.699	7.799	7.107	8.174	71.508
CA	5.905	18.978	30.060	29.793	25.631	17.856	18.730	26.198	23.644	196.795
CO	1.003	3.968	6.168	5.585	6.073	3.213	4.742	2.490	6.11	39.352
CT	1.828	4.675	10.841	9.991	7.287	5.479	6.630	6.925	5.231	58.887
DE	0.132	0.372	1.096	1.755	1.161	1.107	0.518	0.231	1.251	7.623
DC	0	0.22	0	0	0.453	0	0.376	1.171	0	2.22
FL	2.865	10.16	16.344	15.969	17.922	6.787	8.288	6.738	12.581	97.654
GA	2.375	6.079	13.791	11.857	10.168	8.887	9.068	7.959	8.981	79.165
HI	0	1.182	0.947	0.864	1.205	0.264	0.436	0.772	0.609	6.279
ID	0.916	2.744	6.001	4.828	4.684	2.712	4.297	2.687	2.883	31.752
IL	2.417	13.398	28.810	27.238	25.433	21.120	21.923	21.325	25.24	186.904
IN	2.703	8.739	20.456	18.646	15.779	14.447	13.831	13.092	15.179	122.872
IA	1.301	7.284	16.087	16.430	13.119	10.064	9.298	9.877	9.695	93.155
KS	1.153	5.118	10.850	10.211	7.165	4.984	5.502	3.928	6.682	55.593
KY	2.215	7.896	19.832	16.150	14.215	13.308	13.081	17.153	13.108	116.958
LA	3.344	10.084	12.248	11.101	11.630	6.935	5.473	7.033	8.073	75.921
ME	1.296	4.319	10.323	10.031	6.124	6.702	5.486	4.904	3.462	52.647
MD	0.739	4.08	8.153	10.227	8.771	10.368	7.712	5.525	5.221	60.796
MA	2.301	8.386	15.715	13.958	13.529	8.957	11.644	9.532	11.957	95.979
MI	2.815	8.948	17.247	20.005	15.088	15.798	15.399	15.482	18.045	128.827
MN	2.133	8.149	17.510	18.609	14.894	14.718	16.600	13.082	17.253	122.948
MS	1.763	6.755	15.679	11.329	9.856	7.885	8.052	7.761	8.436	77.516
MO	3.079	10.291	19.573	17.757	14.246	13.202	10.611	11.589	12.973	113.321
MT	1.164	3.726	8.361	7.271	6.656	5.839	7.330	4.670	5.179	50.196
NE	1.034	2.392	7.820	6.577	5.116	4.399	4.443	4.324	4.341	40.446
NV	0.282	1.446	3.312	1.405	1.946	0.857	1.530	0.687	0.855	12.32
NH	0.594	1.887	4.584	5.694	4.563	3.307	3.219	2.723	2.834	29.405
NJ	2.596	6.339	19.982	16.488	14.691	12.386	13.266	13.201	15.502	114.451
NM	1.455	3.463	5.048	3.653	2.259	1.461	1.367	1.101	1.605	21.412
NY	3.978	14.728	34.320	35.030	36.009	33.804	22.664	30.204	23.235	233.972
NC	1.949	10.239	22.864	22.360	19.315	18.309	20.031	18.460	20.881	154.408
ND	0.546	2.613	5.105	3.391	2.673	2.459	3.100	3.297	2.527	25.711
OH	2.731	13.742	26.997	29.107	27.344	25.380	26.433	26.938	33.164	211.836

	<b>FY01</b>	<b>FY02</b>	<b>FY03</b>	<b>FY04</b>	<b>FY05</b>	<b>FY06</b>	<b>FY07</b>	<b>FY08</b>	<b>FY09</b>	<b>Total</b>
OK	1.864	4.939	10.540	10.393	8.757	10.852	7.220	6.875	7.239	68.679
OR	1.596	4.892	9.896	10.122	10.014	9.288	5.943	8.438	5.986	66.175
PA	2.89	16.97	45.179	47.898	39.233	41.259	43.610	41.041	37.231	315.311
RI	0.407	1.507	2.327	1.917	2.129	2.025	0.855	1.395	2.46	15.022
SC	1.554	5.257	11.832	14.150	10.544	8.028	10.470	11.040	11.227	84.102
SD	0.904	3.142	5.602	4.693	3.570	2.989	2.474	2.069	2.527	27.97
TN	2.46	11.509	19.306	18.686	15.047	11.209	12.955	16.074	13.311	120.557
TX	3.697	15.644	29.264	30.118	23.480	18.035	17.691	20.458	19.469	177.856
UT	0.9	2.754	4.628	3.880	2.188	2.213	3.378	0.934	2.295	23.17
VT	0.451	1.971	5.163	4.747	2.071	1.456	1.820	1.046	1.974	20.699
VA	2.066	8.79	15.816	16.668	14.357	8.317	10.403	8.370	6.405	91.192
WA	1.535	7.544	18.808	19.565	15.763	16.150	12.951	13.050	10.064	115.43
WV	1.067	3.966	9.942	9.133	10.143	5.838	7.164	7.238	5.331	59.822
WI	2.077	7.518	18.234	19.668	17.685	13.994	19.439	15.216	15.17	129.001
WY	1.09	1.612	3.507	1.811	2.032	1.197	1.645	1.023	1.427	15.344
PR	0.657	0.382	1.643	1.140	1.104	0.528	0.019	0.074	1.154	6.701
MP	0.145	0.225	0	0	0.220	0.172	0	0	0	0.762
GU	0	0.016	0	0	0	0.287	0	0	0	0.303
AS	0.164	0	0	0.284	0	0	0	0	0	0.448
VI	0.741	0	0.544	0	0	0	0	0.233	0	1.518
	<b>91.972</b>	<b>334.41</b>	<b>695.12</b>	<b>679.30</b>	<b>585.61</b>	<b>491.37</b>	<b>494.22</b>	<b>492.52</b>	<b>503.25</b>	<b>4367.8</b>

**Source:** Department of Homeland Security.

**Table 6. State-by-State Distribution of SAFER Grants,  
FY2005-FY2009**  
(millions of dollars)

	<b>FY2005</b>	<b>FY2006</b>	<b>FY2007</b>	<b>FY2008</b>	<b>FY2009</b>	<b>Total</b>
Alabama	1.611	6.215	4.236	7.314	4.288	23.664
Alaska	1.051	0.205	0.418	1.438	0.328	3.44
Arizona	1.560	3.559	4.428	6.613	6.768	22.928
Arkansas	0.394	1.820	0.377	3.834	0.976	7.401
California	5.221	5.212	4.259	4.212	31.501	50.405
Colorado	1.584	3.479	1.730	2.02	0.955	9.768
Connecticut	0.130	0.191	0.856	3.92	2.214	7.311
Delaware	0	0.135	0	0.398	0	0.533
District of Columbia	0	0	0	0	0	0

*Assistance to Firefighters Program: Distribution of Fire Grant Funding*

	<b>FY2005</b>	<b>FY2006</b>	<b>FY2007</b>	<b>FY2008</b>	<b>FY2009</b>	<b>Total</b>
Florida	6.576	9.329	6.217	17.185	24.105	63.412
Georgia	5.354	2.085	2.842	17.438	4.844	32.563
Hawaii	0	0	0	1.626	0	1.626
Idaho	0.063	0.621	0.626	0.774	1.336	3.42
Illinois	1.340	4.463	9.933	5.85	2.496	24.082
Indiana	0	0.099	2.687	4.577	8.295	15.658
Iowa	0.169	0.144	0.980	1.288	1.045	3.626
Kansas	0.667	0.045	1.029	1.872	2.806	6.419
Kentucky	0.152	2.890	0.429	2.466	0.338	6.275
Louisiana	3.430	3.078	4.728	8.62	10.515	30.371
Maine	0.081	0	0.316	0.951	0.739	2.087
Maryland	0.096	1.862	1.526	3.171	4.429	11.084
Massachusetts	1.300	2.079	4.372	2.690	18.385	28.826
Michigan	1.759	0.592	0	0.628	13.286	16.265
Minnesota	0.300	1.089	0.375	3.246	1.256	6.266
Mississippi	0.756	0.594	0.115	1.608	0	3.073
Missouri	1.467	3.547	4.551	2.381	1.474	13.42
Montana	0.034	0.255	2.635	2.955	0.458	6.337
Nebraska	0	0.873	0.632	1.951	0.802	4.258
Nevada	1.500	1.714	0.632	0.086	0.577	4.509
New Hampshire	0.400	1.035	1.528	0.225	0	3.188
New Jersey	6.374	3.971	2.953	4.389	0.556	18.243
New Mexico	0	3.123	1.309	0.108	0.499	5.039
New York	1.540	2.991	2.845	4.412	8.227	20.015
North Carolina	2.155	5.533	5.371	18.183	2.256	33.498
North Dakota	0	0.609	0	1.518	1.517	3.644
Ohio	1.319	1.881	2.255	3.737	29.606	38.798
Oklahoma	0.147	0.699	0.531	2.782	0	4.159
Oregon	1.710	2.141	2.649	2.071	0.677	9.248
Pennsylvania	1.244	1.475	2.633	3.515	1.176	10.043
Rhode Island	0.400	0	0.105	0	1.561	2.066
South Carolina	0.456	0.863	3.218	8.158	2.41	15.105
South Dakota	0.063	0.311	0.211	0.552	0	1.137
Tennessee	2.700	2.719	3.683	1.856	1.148	12.106
Texas	0.951	10.961	8.779	19.06	3.158	42.909
Utah	0.900	3.312	2.098	3.955	1.824	12.089
Vermont	0	0.621	0.632	0	0.119	1.372

	<b>FY2005</b>	<b>FY2006</b>	<b>FY2007</b>	<b>FY2008</b>	<b>FY2009</b>	<b>Total</b>
Virginia	2.091	3.554	0.782	1.849	4.891	13.167
Washington	2.298	2.897	7.340	9.476	2.847	24.858
West Virginia	0	0.187	0.681	0.16	0.287	1.315
Wisconsin	0	0.072	1.223	4.502	0	5.797
Wyoming	0	0	0.316	2.329	0.263	2.908
Puerto Rico	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Mariana Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0
Marshall Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0
Guam	0	0	0	0	0	0
American Samoa	0	0	0	0	0	0
Virgin Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0
Republic of Palau	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>61.356</b>	<b>105.142</b>	<b>113.665</b>	<b>203.964</b>	<b>207.258</b>	<b>691.385</b>

**Source:** Department of Homeland Security.

**Table 7. Requests and Awards for Fire Grant Funding, FY2009**

<b>State</b>	<b>Number of fire/EMS departments</b>	<b>Number of applications</b>	<b>Federal funds requested (\$millions)</b>	<b>Federal funds awarded (\$millions)</b>	<b>Funds awarded as a % of funds requested</b>
Alabama	966	779	114.977	19.966	17.37%
Alaska	75	56	11.088	0.935	8.43%
Arizona	283	178	33.907	4.716	13.91%
Arkansas	826	420	51.329	8.174	15.92%
California	823	534	118.658	23.644	19.93%
Colorado	375	166	32.238	6.11	18.95%
Connecticut	401	253	42.249	5.231	12.38%
Delaware	77	34	5.219	1.251	23.97%
District of Columbia	18	1	2.777	0	0.00%
Florida	755	289	69.808	12.581	18.02%
Georgia	799	395	64.942	8.981	13.83%
Hawaii	20	3	0.867	0.609	70.24%
Idaho	212	116	17.805	2.883	16.19%
Illinois	1090	885	135.105	25.24	18.68%
Indiana	670	507	78.287	15.179	19.39%
Iowa	864	560	60.512	9.695	16.02%

*Assistance to Firefighters Program: Distribution of Fire Grant Funding*

<b>State</b>	<b>Number of fire/EMS departments</b>	<b>Number of applications</b>	<b>Federal funds requested (\$millions)</b>	<b>Federal funds awarded (\$millions)</b>	<b>Funds awarded as a % of funds requested</b>
Kansas	680	276	33.304	6.682	20.06%
Kentucky	796	630	89.445	13.108	14.65%
Louisiana	557	262	43.072	8.073	18.74%
Maine	431	307	38.283	3.462	9.04%
Maryland	418	205	32.181	5.221	16.22%
Massachusetts	408	349	68.931	11.957	17.35%
Michigan	865	776	114.942	18.045	15.70%
Minnesota	770	521	75.941	17.253	22.72%
Mississippi	756	435	57.183	8.436	14.75%
Missouri	865	520	77.004	12.973	16.85%
Montana	283	193	29.121	5.179	17.78%
Nebraska	486	180	22.743	4.341	19.09%
Nevada	161	32	6.162	0.855	13.88%
New Hampshire	256	145	25.849	2.834	10.96%
New Jersey	1044	618	93.849	15.502	16.52%
New Mexico	341	91	20.932	1.605	7.67%
New York	1894	1315	175.848	23.235	13.21%
North Carolina	1411	728	122.919	20.881	16.99%
North Dakota	322	153	16.141	2.527	15.66%
Ohio	1338	1062	155.248	33.164	21.36%
Oklahoma	772	397	51.534	7.239	14.05%
Oregon	360	231	36.695	5.986	16.31%
Pennsylvania	2635	2255	296.739	37.231	12.55%
Rhode Island	101	74	14.173	2.46	17.36%
South Carolina	592	419	67.334	11.227	16.67%
South Dakota	345	179	21.155	2.527	11.95%
Tennessee	649	660	96.677	13.311	13.77%
Texas	1883	775	137.322	19.469	14.18%
Utah	221	120	14.46	2.295	15.87%
Vermont	255	104	10.377	1.974	19.02%
Virginia	822	327	59.621	6.405	10.74%
Washington	543	357	63.019	10.064	15.97%
West Virginia	476	365	49.557	5.331	10.76%
Wisconsin	901	713	92.114	15.17	16.47%
Wyoming	135	51	7.748	1.427	18.42%



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<b>State</b>	<b>Number of fire/EMS departments</b>	<b>Number of applications</b>	<b>Federal funds requested (\$millions)</b>	<b>Federal funds awarded (\$millions)</b>	<b>Funds awarded as a % of funds requested</b>
Puerto Rico	7	8	8.233	1.154	14.02%
Northern Marianas	Not available	2	0.268	0	0.00%
Virgin Islands	Not available	2	0.565	0	0.00%
Guam	Not available	2	1.524	0	0.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,185</b>	<b>21,015</b>	<b>3167.966</b>	<b>503.253</b>	<b>15.89%</b>

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**Sources:** Department of Homeland Security and firehouse.com (number of firehouse/EMS departments, updated June 2009).

## **Author Contact Information**

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