

## Murphy Supports Legislation to Protect and Prepare for Connecticut's Homeland Security Needs

Today, Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) supported homeland security legislation that will revitalize the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) Program, which will enhance bioterrorism preparedness in the Fifth District.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) supported homeland security legislation that will revitalize the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) Program, which will enhance bioterrorism preparedness in the Fifth District. The legislation also includes provisions to restore accountability in the nation's Department of Homeland Security, and renews the nation's investment in protecting the nation from future threats.

"Local municipalities need the tools to provide a fast response to disasters. Firefighters, police, doctors, and EMTs are the first on the scene and they perform heroic acts, and we must prepare them for the worst while working to defend our communities from attack," said Murphy.

H.R. 1684, the Fiscal Year 2008 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Authorization bill authorizes \$63 million a year for five years for MMRS, reversing the President's plan to eliminate this vital program. MMRS supports local jurisdictions, particularly those in the Farmington Valley, by enhancing response capabilities to manage mass casualty incidents. The program provides the funds to better integrating first responders, public health personal, emergency management personnel, and volunteers.

According to the Town of Farmington's web site, MMRS "has made a significant impact on the ability to protect first responders and citizens and to handle a major mass casualty incident."

"Communities across the Fifth District have plans to keep their residents safe in the case of a disaster. This investment in the Metropolitan Medical Response System will give them some peace of mind to know that the federal government is backing their efforts," said Murphy.

The legislation also authorizes \$39.8 billion for the activities of the DHS -- \$2.1 billion more than the President's budget. The bill restores the President's numerous cuts in vital First Responder programs, including the cut of 52 percent in the State Homeland Security Grant program and the cut of 55 percent in Firefighter Assistance Grants. In Fiscal Year 2006, Connecticut communities were awarded more than \$11 million in State Homeland Security Grants.

In order to restore accountability in our government, this bill contains strong measures to strengthen and streamline management in the Department of Homeland Security, reforms the contract process, and improves oversight.

"People in Connecticut expect Congress to oversee how our federal agencies are run and how their money is being spent. This legislation provides not just dollars, but accountability," said Murphy.