

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, February 1, 2010

CONTACT: MARA LEE

(202) 225-7163

Congresswoman Matsui Announces Over \$500,000 in Federal Funding for City Firefighters

SACRAMENTO, CA— Today, Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (D-Sacramento) announced that the City of Sacramento Fire Department will receive \$513,002 through the Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG). Administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), in cooperation with the U.S. Fire Administration, the grant will help the department purchase fitness assessment equipment, effectively implement annual medical examinations and provide additional vaccination and immunizations for all uniform personnel.

“This money is critical to keeping our firefighters healthy and safe,” said Matsui. “In the past year, the fire department has not been able to backfill needed positions, meaning the men and women of the Sacramento Fire Department are working an increasing number of hours. As first responders to our city’s worst disasters and catastrophes, our firefighters need to be in top mental and physical condition. Their health is paramount to serving the community and the lives of their fellow uniformed responders.”

“The money that the Sacramento Fire Department received through this grant will help us purchase new equipment and training tools that will be used to assist our firefighters with physical fitness. It is extremely important that firefighters stay in the best physical condition possible to be able to do their job and protect the citizens of this community,” said Fire Chief Ray Jones of the Sacramento Fire Department. “We all know that firefighters have a very dangerous job. They also have a high rate of heart disease and other medical conditions. Research has shown that a physically fit firefighter will do a much better job, suffer fewer injuries, and have an overall healthier life. I wish to thank FEMA and Congresswoman Doris Matsui for their help with this grant.”

The primary goal of the AFG is to meet the firefighting and emergency response needs of fire departments and nonaffiliated emergency medical service organizations. This funding will help prepare firefighters to deal with daily stresses, build a stronger, healthier workforce that can provide safe and effective service to the community.

AFG has helped firefighters and other first responders obtain critical equipment, protective gear, emergency vehicles, training, and other resources needed to protect the public and emergency personnel from fire and related hazards since 2001.

###