



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

Senator Larkin Secures \$250,000 for City of Newburgh Fire Department

WILLIAM LARKIN April 3, 2018



Senator Bill Larkin (R-C-I, Cornwall-On-Hudson) announced today that he has secured \$250,000 for the City of Newburgh Fire Department for the purpose of replacing their dangerously outdated radio system. Currently the department's radio system, due to bandwidth limitations, does not function outside of the City of Newburgh as well as larger buildings (Mount Saint Mary College, SUNY Orange, St. Lukes Cornwall Hospital, etc.) and all of the high-rise senior housing buildings within the city limits.

“As you may remember on November 20, 2017 at the Verla Industries Fire in New Windsor, several City of Newburgh firefighters were trapped and almost didn’t make it home,” said City of Newburgh Fire Chief Terry Ahlers. “One firefighter was trapped for nine minutes and could not communicate with anyone else because of the radio system we currently use. Obtaining a new radio system has been and continues to be a matter of life and death. That is why in January I wrote to Senator Larkin to ask for his help. Whenever we need something Senator Larkin is who we go to and he delivered big time for us and our community once again.”

“When I received Terry’s letter I was blown away by the limitations of their radio system,” said Senator Bill Larkin. “At that moment I made it a top priority of mine as we worked on the State Budget to ensure that this potential lifesaving funding was included. I believe that fighting for our communities while in Albany for items such as these, is the reason we get elected in the first place. Our firefighters put their lives on the line and have our backs every day, it is important that they know we have their backs as well.”

The Newburgh Fire Department operates on a radio system in the “VHF” bandwidth. This system works within the city limits, with the exception of larger buildings as noted above. It does not work outside of the city limits. Orange County has a radio system that operates within the “UHF” bandwidth. The “UHF” bandwidth allows for all fire departments within the “UHF” bandwidth to communicate at larger, mutual aid incidents, like the Verla Industries fire. During these incidents, the City of Newburgh cannot properly communicate using the “VHF” bandwidth.

With the funding provided by Senator Larkin the City of Newburgh Fire Department will be able to outfit all of their firefighters, officers and chiefs with a radio system capable of

meeting their needs. The \$250,000 will completely replace the outdated, unsafe system. It will provide Newburgh firefighters with water and heat resistant radios that can be operated while wearing gloves, and communicate with other fire departments during mutual aid incidents.

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