



CONGRESSMAN

BILL PASCRELL, JR.

“AMERICA UNITES”



Dear Friend,

Our American family was attacked on September 11th by those who despise our unwavering commitment to liberty. Since moments after the attack, our nation and its people have responded by demonstrating the very best of America. As our nation continues its war on terrorism here at home and abroad, there is nothing more important than standing together in unity.



Bill presenting an American Flag to a National Guard officer at Fresh Kills Landfill in Staten Island.

Just look at what has happened when we are united in spirit and in purpose. Our brave first responders from North Jersey rushed to the aid of their fellow citizens in New York. Average Americans spent countless hours on line to donate blood. Our nation's leaders have come together to unequivocally stand behind our Commander-in-Chief as he sends our troops into battle. America has indeed responded, and done so in a way that should make us all proud.

As we continue to work with our allies to rid the world of terrorism, we must remain patient and committed here at home. As your representative in Congress, I have resolved to work with my colleagues in a bipartisan way to greatly enhance our homeland security, improve the preparedness of our health care and emergency management systems, and tangibly assist those families and businesses struggling to recover. This is not a time for politics, but rather, a time to focus on the needs of the nation.

America will prevail because we must, and we will grow stronger together in our resolve to uphold freedom and democracy.

Sincerely,

Bill



Bill announcing legislation to provide additional funding for our nation's "first responders."

SUPPORTING OUR FIREFIGHTERS

We achieved a hard-fought victory this month for the future of the FIRE Grant program within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). As you know, this first-of-its-kind grant program resulted from the "Firefighter Investment and Response Enhancement (FIRE) Act," which I introduced in March of 1999.

The Department of Defense Authorization bill for Fiscal Year 2002 amends the FIRE Act to allow significant increases in funding for the next three years. This new version of the FIRE Act authorizes \$900 million per year for Fiscal Years 2002, 2003 and 2004.

The increase in funding is sorely needed. In just the first year of the program, over 19,000 fire departments from across America applied for grants, seeking nearly \$3 billion. FEMA, unfortunately, only had \$100 million in funding to distribute nationwide in this first round.

The first \$100 million was awarded to over 1,850 fire departments nationwide, including Verona, Wayne, Clifton, Montclair, and Paterson right here at home. The delivery of these dollars will help our "first responders" by providing better equipment and training and assist our local taxpayers by helping to pay the bill.

As recent events have demonstrated, firefighters are very often the first on the scene and the last to leave. Thanks to the FIRE Bill, the federal government has at long last begun a partnership with firefighters and the taxpayers they protect.

ADDRESSING THE BIOTERRORISM THREAT

To help us meet the challenges of a changed world, the House Democratic Caucus created the Homeland Security Task Force. The panel is working to address issues such as military preparedness, domestic law enforcement, intelligence, physical infrastructure, and transportation security. As Chairman of the Emergency Preparedness Working Group, much of my focus has been on the public health care system and the training of our first responders.

To that end, I recently held an emergency meeting with local firefighters, police chiefs and health care providers to hear their ideas about developing a comprehensive terrorism response plan. I have incorporated their suggestions into the first legislative proposal of the Task Force, HR 3255, "The Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2001."

Our plan allots \$7.5 billion to:

- eliminate biological threats;
- secure our borders on land and at sea;
- protect our food and water;
- equip our communities with the resources to prevent and respond to bioterrorism;
- strengthen our intelligence through full coordination using our most advanced technology.

This is the first in a series of proposals our Task Force will put forward to address homeland security. My colleagues and I look forward to working with the President, our Congressional colleagues, and Homeland Security Director Tom Ridge to help our communities strengthen their ability to prepare for and respond to terrorist attacks.



For Our Kids

Seeing frightening or distressing events such as those shown on television can take away a child's basic sense of safety and security, just as it does for adults. Provided below is a list of phone numbers of trained, certified child and adolescent counselors at no cost, who will help our children manage the anger and stress that they might feel.

- Mental Health Board, Passaic:
973-225-3700
- Mental Health Board, Essex:
973-228-8230
- New Jersey Division of Mental Health Services: 1-800-382-6717
- National Mental Health Association:
1-800-969-NMHA

USEFUL WEBSITES

www.fema.gov/kids
www.fema.gov/nwz01/nwz01_99.htm

SENDING THANKS

The New York City Post Office and the Federal Emergency Management Agency have designated a post office box for letters of recognition and thanks to the brave rescue workers. Anyone who wishes to send letters can mail them to:

**Search and Rescue
P.O. Box 2551
New York, NY 10166**



Bill speaking to students about the constitution and our commitment to freedom as a nation.

TIGHTER SECURITY AT OUR AIRPORTS



After a long two months, the Congress has passed a sweeping aviation security measure that will greatly improve security at our nation's airports. As a member of the House Subcommittee on Aviation, I am proud to have worked on the final bill signed into law by the President on November 19, 2001. The bill requires passengers to be screened by highly trained federal employees. Cockpit doors on all commercial aircraft will be strengthened and equipped with locks, and all persons and vehicles entering an airport's secured area will be inspected. This measure also expands the Federal Sky Marshall program, allowing marshalls to be placed on any passenger flight.

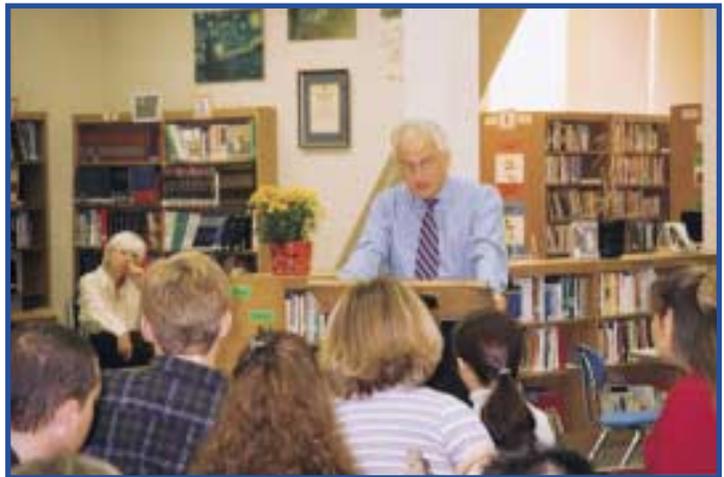
The message of this bill is clear. Airport security is a matter of national security, we have an obligation to protect everyone who uses our aviation system.

TOUGHER PENALTIES FOR BOMB THREATS

Following September 11, we have seen the very best of America on display. We have also witnessed some of the worst among us attempting to wreck havoc on our communities and public safety operations by making false bomb threats against schools and public buildings. False bomb threats disrupt school days, frighten our children, and keep public safety officials from their important life-saving work. These threats are cowardly, dangerous, and represent emotional terrorism at its very worst.

That is why I have introduced legislation in Congress to require mandatory minimum sentencing under federal law for those who make bomb threats against individuals, buildings, or property. Current federal law recommends prison sentences ranging from ten months to six and a half years, depending on the criminal history of the perpetrator, but there are no minimum sentencing requirements.

My legislation will toughen the law substantially. It will require any person with a criminal record found guilty of making a bomb threat to be sent to prison for at least three years. A repeat offender will be sentenced to a minimum of six years in prison, and those who did not have a prior record will face one year behind bars, no questions asked. **These punishments will show would-be offenders that we mean business as a community and that these threats will no longer be tolerated.**



Bill speaking about the need for tough penalties for those who make false bomb threats.

OFFICES TO SERVE YOU

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(973) 523-5152

Bloomfield Municipal Plaza
Room 200A Town Hall • Bloomfield, NJ 07003
(973) 680-1361

Passaic City Hall
330 Passaic Street • Passaic, NJ 07005
(973) 472-4510

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