

Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner

Assembly District 113



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Dear Friend,

I hope you and your family are healthy and well. This difficult chapter in our state and nation's history has given us a greater appreciation and respect for our first responders. During the height of this pandemic, these heroes stepped up without hesitation to help others and continue to put their lives on the line for us today. As your representative in Albany, I'm committed to supporting these brave men and women and will always use my voice to ensure their needs and concerns are heard loud and clear.

This past legislative session, I helped pass important pieces of legislation, including laws that designate emergency responders, dispatchers and operators as "first responders in communications" and provide benefits for people who were employed in qualified service during the World Trade Center rescue, recovery and cleanup operations (Ch. 426, 424 of 2021). To ensure first responders can effectively and safely serve our communities, I authored a bill allowing air transport ambulances to carry blood and emergency medical technicians on board to perform transfusions (A.2561-B) and passed legislation regulating the use of flame-retardant chemicals in upholstered furniture, mattresses and electronics to reduce the impact of fires (A.5418-B). I also authored a bill to allow death or disability benefits claims due to vascular rupture, which was inspired by the tragic death of one of our very own heroes, Whitehall Volunteer Fire Company Chief James Brooks (A.6767-A).

A significant issue currently facing our EMS and fire agencies is the difficulty of recruiting and retaining members. That's why I'm advocating for my bill that would help attract more people to this line of work by increasing the tax credit for volunteer firefighters and EMS members from \$200 to \$1,200 (A.886). However, I know more work needs to be done to encourage others to enter this critical field and gain the training they need. I'll continue looking for ways to support our young



volunteers, such as awarding additional scholarship opportunities and ensuring they receive adequate credit for the extensive education they complete.

I recently had the honor of recognizing two local first responder services – the Salem Rescue Squad and the Salem Volunteer Fire Department – for their commitment to protecting our communities, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. These first responders went above the call of duty to save lives and inspire a new generation of heroes to follow in their footsteps. This event gave me the opportunity to personally express my gratitude for their courage and selflessness and I'll continue to put my words into action.

We owe so much to our first responders and I'll always be in their corner. I welcome anyone who has questions or suggestions on how to better assist our local departments to contact my office at 518-584-5493 or WoernerC@nyassembly.gov.

Sincerely,



Assemblywoman Carrie

Woerner

