



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian X. Foley

Senator Foley Saves Fire Districts Money

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Senator Brian X. Foley (D – Blue Point) sponsored legislation (S5113), which passed the senate this week, that would allow fire districts to seek reimbursement for certain costs associated with responding to hazardous material spills.

The legislation, which has already passed the assembly, would allow municipalities or fire districts that contract with or control fire companies to bill transportation companies for certain costs associated with responding to incidents involving the release or threatened release of a hazardous material by a transporter of hazardous materials. The Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation, working with a number of other commissioners, will also be required to identify resources and funding from already existing sources for the reimbursement for the costs authorized by the legislation.

“Allowing fire districts to seek reimbursement for responding to clean-ups that cost them more than the traditional calls they receive is going to go a long way towards helping our fire districts stay within their budgets without having to raise taxes,” said Senator Foley. “When these transportation companies are asked to haul materials, they expect to be paid extra if they have to spend an additional day or travel additional miles to deliver the material. So too should our fire departments be paid extra when they go above and beyond to protect the residents of our state when there is an accident involving a transporter of hazardous materials.”

“ We applaud Senator Foley for his tireless efforts in getting this very important piece of legislation passed in the NYS Senate,” said Thomas J. Cuff, Jr., President of the Firemen’s Association of the State of New York. “At a time when those in public service are asked to tighten their belts and make budget cuts across the board, we are grateful this legislation will help us utilize additional funds, so we will not be forced to spend beyond our budgeting limits. This legislation will ensure that each and every resident of our great state who rely on volunteer firefighters will continue to be protected and receive the same excellent lifesaving service they deserve.”

Currently, municipal corporations and fire districts that contract with or control fire companies do not have the authority to seek reimbursement for responding to hazardous material spills and must simply incur the cost.