



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Grisanti

Grisanti's Bill Allows Volunteer Emergency Responders To Take Authorized Leaves Of Absence For States Of Emergency

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Senator Mark Grisanti (R, I-60) announced passage of Senate Bill S.1604 that will change the labor law to make it an authorized absence for members of the volunteer fire department and volunteer ambulance squads when they respond to a state of emergency declared by either the federal or state government.

Employers will not be able to charge the time to vacation, sick leave or other excused absences provided the employee provides a statement from the head of the volunteer firefighter department or volunteer ambulance squad defining the applicable period of time that the employee was called on to respond to the state of emergency.

"I am pleased that this bill has passed the Senate and will protect those who serve as volunteer firefighters and ambulance squad members," said Senator Grisanti. "The many good men and good women who serve their community during times of distress and uncertainty will now be protected in their jobs when they answer the call of duty."

Since 1954, the state of New York has asked FEMA to declare almost 60 major disaster declarations, often catastrophic events that have included snowstorms, flooding, tornadoes, earthquakes and ice storms.

"New York State is fortunate to have such tremendous first responders who play

essential roles in states of emergency," said Grisanti. "The volunteering of one's time should not be punished or discouraged. We hope this law will make it easier for those with the will and skill to help to take leaves from their day jobs to assist us in our time of need."

This marks the second consecutive year that this bill has passed the Senate.