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STATE
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December 1st, 2021

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

I write asking for consideration for a **new dedicated funding line in the 2022-23 New York State budget - a fire station construction fund**. This is an important matter that affects the public safety of all New Yorkers, as fires do not discriminate based on race, class, geography, or political party. As you hold the authority to propose important legislative initiatives within your first Executive Budget, I ask that you include a fire station construction fund within your proposal in order to set the tone of public discourse on this issue and ensure the best chance of such a fund becoming State law.

Fire districts, departments, and companies across New York State are crucial for protecting both the lives and property of all New Yorkers. Across the State, our brave firefighters and their leaders – both paid and volunteer – do “more with less”, stretching budgets and economizing where possible. As our first Governor from north of Dutchess County in a century, I believe you understand the unique infrastructure challenges that fire companies face in upstate and western New York especially. Many of the firehouses in our region and especially in my 43rd Senate District are more than a century old and require significant funds to upgrade or even replace. I recently had the pleasure of touring the Village of Stillwater’s firehouse which was constructed in 1896. The firefighters there can no longer purchase new, up-to-date fire trucks as they will not fit in this nearly 130-year old structure. This fire station represents just one case of the need for a dedicated capital improvement fund available to firefighters.

I believe the current library construction fund – authorized by Section 273-a of the Education Law and funded annually at around \$34 million – provides an excellent model of what State support for dedicated, often-volunteer local leaders can look like. I have introduced a bill, **S.7558**, which creates a fire station construction grant fund similar to the state aid for library construction program. My bill may provide a useful model for you to include within the 2022-23 Executive Budget proposal.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daphne V. Jordan".

Daphne Jordan
Senator, 43rd District