

Announcement of Federal Funding for Pearisburg Volunteer Fire Department

□

Pearisburg, Virginia

□

I am pleased to return to Pearisburg today to announce a major allocation of federal funding that will significantly benefit the Town's fire department.

At my urging, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, through its Rural Development Agency, is providing a low-interest, federal loan of \$2,819,588 to the Town of Pearisburg for the construction of a new fire station.

The Town's current fire station is more than 60 years old. The station's bays are too small to accommodate modern fire trucks and firefighting equipment. In addition, the building is multi-level and is not fully accessible for individuals with disabilities.

With the benefit of the federal funding announced today, the Town will demolish the existing building and construct in its place a new, state-of-the-art fire station. The new fire station will contain three double bay doors to accommodate the Fire Department's fire trucks as well as a training room and office space.

Construction of the new fire station is expected to begin next year and will be completed in 2012.

The Pearisburg Volunteer Fire Department provides fire protection to the Town of Pearisburg and the surrounding areas of Giles County. The department has 44 members, all of whom serve on a voluntary basis.

Members of our region's fire departments are our first line of defense in times of emergency in our communities. These individuals, many of whom serve on a voluntary basis, are generous members of our society who risk personal safety for the public good. It is important to protect the safety of these individuals by providing them with the best facilities, equipment and training possible. Today's announcement will help advance this goal for the Pearisburg Fire Department.

There are several individuals who deserve our thanks today for their role in securing this allocation of federal funding.

First, I want to thank the members of the Pearisburg Fire Department for the outstanding service they provide to Giles County residents. Fire Chief Rusty Stump, who joins us today, deserves our recognition for his excellent leadership.

I also want to thank Barbara Stafford, Mayor of Pearisburg, and the other members of the Pearisburg Town Council for their outstanding commitment to the Town's residents.

Ken Vittum, Pearisburg's Town Manager, also deserves our thanks today.

Ellen Davis, State Director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Agency, and Travis Jackson, Area Director, deserve our thanks today for their outstanding work and support of this project.

I also want to thank Barbara Hobbs, Chair of the Giles County Board of Supervisors, and the other members of the Board, for their outstanding support of projects like these that benefit Giles County residents.

Today's announcement is a significant step forward in protecting the people who protect us, and I want to offer special congratulations to the members of the Pearisburg Fire Department who will benefit from the new fire station.