

PAUL A. GOSAR, D.D.S.
FOURTH DISTRICT, ARIZONA

504 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-2315

122 N. CORTEZ STREET, SUITE #104
PRESCOTT, AZ 86301
(928) 445-1683

270 E. HUNT HIGHWAY, SUITE #12
SAN TAN VALLEY, AZ 85143
(480) 882-2697

220 N. 4TH STREET
KINGMAN, AZ 86401
(928) 445-1683

WWW.GOSAR.HOUSE.GOV



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0301

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September 12, 2013

Mr. Brian Kamoie
Assistant Administrator, FEMA
Grants Program Preparedness
Tech World Building—9th Floor, North Tower
800 K Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Kamoie,

I am writing today in support of the Yarnell Fire Department's grant application for resources available under the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program. The Yarnell Fire Department plays a very important public safety role in rural Arizona, and this grant would allow these brave firefighters to continue to provide emergency services over the next several years.

The services provided by the Yarnell Fire District are not limited to local communities and private lands. They are frequently involved with fighting wildland fires on federal lands. As you may know, there was a catastrophic wildfire that occurred in Yarnell, Arizona in late June of this year. That fire took the lives of 19 courageous hotshot firefighters. During this devastating tragedy, the Yarnell Fire Department battled those blazes and saved lives, homes, and infrastructure. The fire department lost many of its volunteer members during this terrible fire because they lost their homes or due to the trauma of the disaster, and it currently only has 4 full time professional firefighters, only 1 or 2 of which are available at any given time to respond to a call—the rest are volunteers. These SAFER Grant monies will allow them to recruit, train, and retain new personnel to respond to emergencies and save lives.

The Yarnell Fire Department's jurisdiction also happens to include parts of the Agua Fria National Monument and the Prescott National Forest in its jurisdiction. Therefore, their dedication to fighting fires in both private and public areas further warrants supplemental federal resources.

As the representative for these areas, I have seen first-hand the Yarnell Fire Department's exemplary work, and I am aware of the unique difficulties these firefighters face. I ask that FEMA give due consideration to the Yarnell Fire Department's application for this grant opportunity.

Thank you for your fair and thoughtful analysis of the grant application. I am confident that, given its credentials, the Mayer Fire District would fare well in any competitive grant process. As always, I ask that this matter be handled in strict accordance with the existing agency rules, regulations, and ethical guidelines. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
Member of Congress