

Bost Bill Will Improve Access To Affordable Housing For First Responders

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Representative Mike Bost (IL-12) today introduced bipartisan legislation to improve access to affordable housing programs for volunteer firefighters and first responders. The Volunteer First Responder Housing Act would expand access to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Single Family Housing

Guaranteed Loan Program and the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Good Neighbor Next Door Sales Program in order to improve recruitment and retention for volunteer departments.

“As a former firefighter, I know how hard it can be for small, rural fire departments to recruit and retain qualified volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel,” said Bost. “Our first responders run selflessly toward danger every day to protect their neighbors and their homes. They shouldn’t have to worry about whether or not they can get assistance of their own.”

The Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program helps lenders provide loans to low or moderate income households in rural areas. The Volunteer First Responder Housing Act would allow qualified first responders to deduct \$18,000 from their incomes for the purposes of eligibility.

The expanded access included in this legislation for the Good Neighbor Next Door Program would also give discounts on homes owned by HUD in certain revitalization areas to volunteer firefighters and EMS.

Support for the Volunteer First Responder Housing Act

The bill is supported by the National Volunteer Fire Council, National Rural Housing Coalition, National Association of Towns and Townships, International Association of Fire Chiefs, and National Association of Counties.