

NEWS RELEASE

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In a significant victory for the Air Force Sergeants Association and enlisted firefighters stationed around the world, Congress has approved Hazardous Duty Incentive Pay (HDIP) for Enlisted Firefighters as Section 615 of H.R. 4200, the FY 2005 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Section 615 provides the authority to provide HDIP for military firefighters at a rate "not to exceed \$150 for periods when performing regular participation as a firefighting crew member as determined by the secretary concerned." President Bush is expected to sign the NDAA in the next 10 days.

This achievement is the result of an intense year of AFSA lobbying as association representatives steered the measure through Congress by repeatedly visiting the offices of and providing materials to every member of the House and Senate Armed Services Committee. These unrelenting visits complemented AFSA's singular congressional testimony on the issue.

Through unyielding determination, AFSA was able to gain the invaluable sponsorship of Rep. Gene Taylor, D-MS, and Sen. Tim Johnson, D-ND, without whose help we could not have gotten the job done. At the urging of AFSA officials, The Military Coalition urged Congress to approve the measure, and representatives of the Military Officers Association of America and the Fleet Reserve Association joined AFSA in the lobbying effort.

This achievement was the result of dedication and commitment on the part of AFSA lobbyists, Pentagon officials who lent assistance and provided timely data as AFSA called for it, responsive coalition influence, and a good grassroots response from AFSA members and individual firefighters around the Air Force. Persuasive information, dogged determination, persistence, and leadership yielded this hard-fought victory.

Congratulations to all AFSA members and the enlisted firefighters who put their lives on the line every day, in peacetime and wartime. While this effort has been pursued for many years, it took a collective effort to finally make it happen. All AFSA members should be extremely proud of this notable chapter in Air Force enlisted heritage.



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Executive Director