

**SPEECH AS WRITTEN FOR DELIVERY BY  
VADM THOMAS J. BARRETT, USCG (RET.)  
ADMINISTRATOR  
PIPELINE & HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SAFETY ADMINISTRATION  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**WASHINGTON STATE HMEP GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT  
BELLEVUE FIRE DEPARTMENT, STATION #6  
1850 132<sup>ND</sup> AVENUE, NE  
BELLEVUE, WA  
@ 10:30 A.M.  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2006**

Thank you Lt. Kroon for that very kind introduction and for hosting our grant announcement today.

I would also like to thank

- Congressman Dave Reichert
- Ron Wilson, Washington Emergency Management Division
- Eric Holdeman, King County Office of Emergency Management
- Lt. Mark Arras, Washington State Patrol and
- Ray Sturtz, City of Woodinville Local Emergency Planning Committee

for participating in our event.

I am here today because Congressman Reichert told me about the outstanding first responder team you have here in Irwin. He has high praise for the fire fighters of this department, and the close working relationship you have with the King County Community.

You and your fellow fire fighters are the unsung heroes who ensure the safety of citizens in responding to incidents involving hazardous materials.

So, on behalf of the Bush Administration, and Transportation Secretary Mary Peters, I'd like to tell you that we greatly appreciate the dedication of the first responder community for risking your lives every day.

I am also here today to announce a DOT Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grant to the State of Washington in the amount of 206,220 dollars. This grant will fund hazardous materials emergency preparedness planning and training activities for first responders at the state, county and local level.

I've learned that the State of Washington has used past HMEP Grant funding to become better prepared in a number of ways, including training first responders through the Washington State Patrol and providing direct assistance to Local Emergency Planning Committees throughout the State. In fact I just received word that funds from today's grants will be used right here in your community. The King County Emergency Management Division will be receiving up to \$4,000 for LEPC planning and the City of Woodinville will be receiving over \$5,100 for emergency preparedness assistance. Congratulations to King County's Eric Holdeman and Woodinville's Ray Sturtz for their successful grant applications.

This is exactly what the HMEP Grants Program was established to do..., to improve the safety and security of our communities by providing funding for hazmat training and preparedness.

Thank you, Congressman Reichert, for your strong leadership in Congress to ensure that this Program is fully funded and available to our first responders.

Congressman Reichert is also a sponsor of the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act now making its way through Congress. This legislation would greatly strengthen federal oversight of the nation's oil and natural gas pipelines by providing additional funds to our state partners. It also allows for tougher enforcement to folks that dig around pipelines and damage them without notifying the appropriate emergency officials. In essence it also provides additional assistance to each of you to prevent pipeline accidents from occurring and releasing hazardous products into the environment.

All Americans will benefit when these additional pipeline safety requirements are signed into law by President Bush.

The safe and secure transportation of hazardous materials is a big job, and the Federal government can't do it alone. We rely heavily on the trained and fearless group of professional fire fighters, police, and other first responders found in local fire departments, like the one here in Bellevue.

Our hope is that the funds we provide to the State of Washington continue to flow down to the county and local community emergency preparedness units that need the hazmat training and planning the most.

Together with the help of your representatives in Congress, and the brave men and women on the front lines of emergency response, we can advance the safety and security of our transportation systems.

Now I would like to offer the floor to Congressman Dave Reichert.

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