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TO: All House Members

FROM: Rep. Jerry Knowles 
124th Legislative District

DATE: December 30, 2010

SUBJECT: Draft Legislation – **Employer Tax Credit for Firefighters**

In the immediate future, I plan to re-introduce legislation that will, hopefully, assist in addressing the decrease in both recruitment and retention of our volunteer fire and EMS personnel and the struggles they face in participating in necessary and timely training.

This legislation will:

- Encourage private employers to permit an employee who is an active volunteer to leave work in response to an emergency call;
- Encourage private employers to permit an employee who is an active volunteer to take a paid leave of absence at the request of a fire chief to participate in bona fide training;
- Require the Commonwealth and its political subdivisions to permit employees who are active volunteers to respond to an emergency call prior to or during work hours, with or without pay, and no loss of time or efficiency rating;
- Prohibit all employers from discriminating against, refusing to hire or employ any individual due to their being a member of a volunteer emergency service organization; and
- Authorize a tax credit for private employers who allow an employee-volunteer to leave work for training or to respond to an emergency call.

The Commonwealth and its political subdivisions will be required to grant up to five days of unpaid leave per year for bona-fide training. In addition, the Commonwealth and its political subdivisions will be authorized to grant up to five days of paid leave per year for bon-fide training.

If you wish to co-sponsor this legislation, please contact Tracy Baker, in my Harrisburg office, at 787-9029 or email – tbaker@pahousegop.com.

JK/tb