



ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

HON. KEVIN R. HARDWICK
LEGISLATOR

April 23, 2015

Mr. W. Craig Fugate
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Administration
500 C Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20472-0001

Dear Administrator Fugate,

I write in support of the application submitted by the City of Tonawanda Police Department for funding from the Port Security Grant Program (PSGP) through the Federal Emergency Management Agency. This funding will help the department purchase new equipment for its team of scuba divers to significantly enhance multi-jurisdictional port security patrols.

The City of Tonawanda's multi-jurisdictional port security patrols include municipalities within both Erie and Niagara Counties, including the Town of Tonawanda, City of Tonawanda, City of North Tonawanda, Town of Grand Island, and the Town of Wheatfield. Located 10 miles from the Canadian border, the City of Tonawanda Police Department is comprised of 30 officers and 10 civilian employees protecting 18,000 citizens. Many of the duties of the Police Department include patrolling the local parks adjacent to the area's many waterways and marine patrol. The Department also has a full team of certified scuba divers who help to examine the underside of vessels in support of the recovery of concealed property or evidence of other criminal activity passing through local waterways. Additionally, City of Tonawanda police divers can safely detect and inspect for underwater hazardous devices (UHDs) and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) to provide and sustain increased port surveillance and protection to local MTSA-regulated facilities.

The divers also conduct safety inspections of docking and mooring areas where large numbers of people congregate during the many events that are hosted throughout this region, including Canal Fest, Tonawandas Gateway Harbor festivities, annual jet boat races, and our summer concert series.

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The requested funding will be used to purchase a state-of-the-art side scanning sonar device that can be used by the dive team on its recently acquired state-of-the-art patrol vessel as a towed-behind side scan sonar to produce images from both sides of the vessel. This vital equipment will enhance the ability of its dive team to support maritime domain awareness and the detection of underwater improvised explosive devices.

I ask that you please give this application your full consideration. If you have any questions, or desire further information, please do not hesitate to contact my staff member Susan Gregg at 716-858-8672.

Sincerely,



Kevin R. Hardwick
Erie County Legislator – 4th District