

Press



Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Legislator Hood to Hold Committee Discussion on Service Fee Established by the County Office of Fire & Emergency Services

New City, NY (June 23, 2010) – Rockland County Legislator Jay Hood, Jr., Chairman of the Legislature’s Public Safety Committee, will schedule a discussion for the June 30th committee meeting to review a decision by the County’s Office of Fire and Emergency Services (OFES) to charge local volunteer fire departments a fee to perform an annual test which is mandated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Previously, this test was performed free of charge at the County Fire Training Center. The discussion is also sponsored by Legislator Robert Jackson.

The “Respirator Fit Test” is required to assess if the respirator face mask used by a firefighter is a correct fit for the firefighter. OFES will now charge a \$30 fee annually, per firefighter to perform the test. OFES explained that the difficult financial times necessitate changes to the operating structure and in addition to the newly-imposed Fit Test fee, includes adjustment to training hours and availability of instructors for certain training sessions.

Legislator Hood said, “I’d like to determine how this testing procedure was previously funded in the OFES budget, how the new charge will affect the budgets of our local fire departments and just, who, in the long run pays the tab. I understand we are under financial constraints in the County but passing the costs to the Fire Districts and Villages will only burden the taxpayer more on the local level. It is a service we have performed for 5 to 6 years, I believe we should find a way to continue the service.”

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