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## **Rhode Island Association of Fire Chiefs Support of Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act**

PROVIDENCE – April 17, 2008 – The Rhode Island Association of Fire Chiefs (RIAFC) today announced its support of the Federal Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act (S. 582), introduced in the U.S. Senate by Senator Gordon Smith (R-Ore.) and co-sponsored by Senators Jack Reed (D-RI) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), and its companion legislation (H.R. 1742), introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Congressman James Langevin (D-RI).

The Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act would provide tax incentives for the voluntary installation and retrofitting of automatic sprinklers in buildings by reducing the tax depreciation time on non-residential real property from 39 years to five years.

The Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act also would help lower local fire department costs, reduce insurance claims and premiums, increase the number of retrofitting and installation jobs, and generate additional payroll tax revenue.

The importance of automatic fire sprinkler systems is well known, and was tragically demonstrated at the Station Nightclub fire in 2003, when 100 people were killed and hundreds more injured. Three days before the Station Nightclub fire, there was a pyrotechnic fire in a nightclub in Minnesota. That establishment had an automatic fire sprinkler system and the fire did not result in a single death or injury.

The National Fire Protection Association has no record of a fire killing more than two people in a public assembly, educational, institutional or residential building with a complete and fully operational automatic fire sprinkler system.

“The Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act is critical to improving public safety and we are confident that the tax incentives provided by this legislation will encourage business owners to voluntarily install automatic fire sprinklers on their property,” said RIAFC President Timothy McLaughlin. “The Rhode Island Association of Fire Chiefs would like to thank Senators Reed and Whitehouse, and Congressman Langevin for recognizing the importance of this legislation.”

Members of the RIAFC had the opportunity to discuss the Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act with legislators during the recent 20<sup>th</sup> Annual National Fire and Emergency Services Conference in Washington, D.C. The conference is sponsored by the Congressional Fire Services Institute (CFSI), a non-profit, non-partisan policy institute charged with educating members of the U.S. Congress and the U.S. Senate on fire and life safety issues.

The Rhode Island Association of Fire Chiefs is a professional organization dedicated to improving efficiency, preparedness and emergency response time, to educating the public about fire safety and to providing a support system for Rhode Island fire chiefs, firefighters and emergency medical technicians in times of crisis.

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**CAPTION:**

**(RI Fire Chiefs 4-3-08):** Members of the Rhode Island Association of Fire Chiefs recently met with Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) during the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual National Fire and Emergency Services Conference in Washington, D.C. Back row, from left: Chief Jeffrey Lynch, Portsmouth; Chief Richard Susi, Cumberland Hill, Chief Alexander Galinelli, Warren; Senator Sheldon Whitehouse; Scott Barker, Westerly Ambulance Corp.; Dwayne Allen III, Westerly Ambulance Corp.; RIAFC President Chief Timothy McLaughlin, Pawtucket; and John Lyman, Rhode Island State Firemen’s League. Front row, from left: Chief David Sayles, Westerly; Chief Joseph Mollo, Smithfield; Deputy Chief Kevin Quinn, Union; Chief Stuart Pearson, Harmony; Chief George Farrell, Providence; and Chief Fred Stanley, Hope Valley/Wyoming.