



**American
Red Cross**

in Greater New York

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ARC/GNY DELEGATION VISITS STATE CAPITAL IN ALBANY

Budgetary Issues Discussed With State Legislators

Editor's Note: Photo Available

New York, NY, February 8, 2006 — A delegation of staff and volunteers from the American Red Cross in Greater New York (ARC/GNY) traveled to the New York State capital in Albany to urge state legislators to include funding for Red Cross programs and services in the 2006 state budget. The group met with over 30 members of the New York State Senate and Assembly who represent the five boroughs of New York City and the lower-Hudson counties of Orange, Putnam, Rockland and Sullivan.

In 2005, \$2.5 million was included in the state budget for all 36 Red Cross chapters in New York State. This year New York State Governor George Pataki has allocated \$5 million as part of his proposed budget for 2006. The focus of the visit to Albany was to ask state legislators to join with the Governor and provide additional funding from the Senate and Assembly in this year's budget to increase Red Cross emergency preparedness programs, enhance disaster response services and ensure an adequate blood supply for New York State.

“The Red Cross is fortunate to have strong friendships with elected officials on all levels of government, especially in Governor Pataki and the New York State legislature,” ARC/GNY Chief Response Officer Scott Graham said. “Traveling to the state capital to meet with these legislators was vital to ensure that the New York State chapters receive funding to meet the increasing need for services and programs while also providing an opportunity to thank the Senators and Assembly members for their continued support.”

Mr. Graham was joined on the trip by Senior Director for Community Development Olivier Szlos; Director of Government Relations Alex Lutz, and the Area Directors for the Bronx, Brooklyn, Staten Island, Orange/Sullivan and Rockland/Putnam. Additional trips are planned to ensure a Red Cross presence throughout the state budget negotiations, which are expected to continue through February.

Now in its 100th year, the American Red Cross in Greater New York helps nearly nine million people in New York City and Orange, Putnam, Rockland & Sullivan Counties avoid, prepare for and respond to emergencies. The largest Red Cross Chapter in the United States, 5,000 dedicated volunteers and talented staff provide immediate aid to more than 100,000 people affected by 3,000 emergencies a year – from fires and flood, to building collapses and blackouts. The Chapter also helps more than 200,000 New Yorkers a year prepare for emergencies through public outreach programs and lifesaving training classes in CPR, First Aid, Water Safety and Caregiving throughout the region.

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