



March 16, 2009

VIA EMAIL ONLY

Representative Joan Ballweg
41st Assembly District
115 South, State Capitol
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Representative Ballweg:

We are writing you today to express our support of the Collapse Rescue Team Working Group proposed implementation plan for collapse rescue services.

We have supported the Collapse Rescue Team initiative since its infancy. The majority of fire departments in Wisconsin have limited staffing and resources. Response to emergent situations in areas that require specialized training, such as in collapse rescue, is cost prohibitive for the vast majority of communities. It is reassuring to know that there is a plan for a state wide asset to respond with specialized equipment and trained personnel in the event of a collapse rescue event.

The Wisconsin Fire Chiefs Education Association attended and participated in the formulation of the Collapse Team Working Group plan and we support the "single" team concept.

As Fire Service leaders, we believe that this plan will not only maximize training, but would also promote efficiency in the overall objective and enhance the safety of the participating team members as well.

In today's economic state, reducing the number of team member participation from 450 to 250 members is reasonable and responsible. Streamlining the team membership would allow monies to be reallocated towards more training, equipment, and personnel.

We sincerely hope that the Wisconsin Emergency Management, Office of Justice Assistance, and you will seriously consider the recommendations provided by the Collapse Team Working Group report. On behalf of the members of Wisconsin Fire Chief's Education Association we feel very strongly that the recommendations of our peers are realistic. These recommendations must advance to bring this program to a reality.

Respectfully,

Bradley J. Liggett
Fire Chief – City of Beloit
Chair WFCEA