



**NEW YORK STATE DIVISION OF THE BUDGET
TOWN HALL HEARINGS
NOVEMBER 30, 2007**

American Red Cross
Suffolk County Chapter
Diane M. Amarosa
Executive Director

American Red Cross
Nassau County Chapter
Frank Cassano
Chief Executive Officer

When disasters happen firefighters put out the fires, the police maintain law and order but who takes care of the victims? Who provides them with health and mental health services and access to their medication? Who provides them with a place to sleep, food to eat, blankets to keep them warm, clothing to wear and shoes to keep their feet dry? Who provides their babies with diapers and baby formula? Who provides them with a shoulder to lean on? This is the role of the American Red Cross and a role we are proud of.

In New York State there is a network of 36 chapters that serve their neighbors in a variety of ways. In Nassau and Suffolk counties we offer programs and services geared to meet the needs of our combined population of nearly 2.9 million people. In 2007 the total funds received from New York State for our region was \$629,450. These funds assisted us in providing over a half million units of service to the residents of Nassau and Suffolk counties.

- We provided 1,300 units of service to members of the Armed Forces and their families.
- We assisted 1,100 people at 260 disaster incidents.
- We trained nearly 200,000 people in CPR, First Aid, AED, Child Care and Water Safety courses.
- We served 250,000 meals to senior citizens.
- We trained nearly 40,000 people on how to prevent, prepare and respond to a disaster should one occur.

Statewide the American Red Cross chapters:

- Responded to more than 5,000 disasters, many of them residential fires.
- Provided health and safety training, including aquatics, for more than 620,000 individuals.
- Provided more than 190,000 New Yorkers with basic preparedness training.
- Collected and provided blood for a major portion of New York State communities.

Each year, the need for Red Cross Programs and Services increases while our traditional sources of funding decrease. We have cut our expenses and increased our fundraising efforts but it is not enough to overcome the decline in giving. As a result, we must reach out to our partners in government for assistance. The American Red Cross is the only not-for-profit chartered by Congress to provide disaster relief, yet our chapters do not receive government funding.

This year the 36 chapters in New York State are requesting \$20 million in the 2008-09 State budget to help support the programs and services we provide for all New Yorkers. We are confident that funding our proposal will increase our ability to protect the health and welfare of the citizens of New York State.

On behalf of the other 34 chapters in New York State and on behalf of the citizens of New York whose needs have been met, are currently being served or who may need our services in the coming year, thank you for taking the time to meet with us and thank you for considering our request.