

Governor Cellucci

Firefighter Awards

Saturday, October 28, 2000

A vertical graphic on the left side of the page. It features a yellow diamond shape at the top with a horizontal line extending to the right. Below this, the word "SPEECHES" is written vertically in a blue, bold, sans-serif font. The letters are slightly shadowed, giving a 3D effect. The graphic is positioned to the left of the main text area.

SPEECHES

Thank you Jane (Perlov).

Today we are here to honor a truly noble profession. Everyday, firefighters across the state put their lives on the line so you and I can enjoy a sense of safety and security. Most of the time, this service goes unrecognized, but sometimes the sacrifices these everyday heroes make command our attention.

Such was the case last December when six Worcester firefighters went into a burning warehouse to search for people who might be trapped in the building. These six men risked their own lives to help others, and they paid the ultimate price.

The Worcester Cold Storage and Warehouse fire was a tragedy that was felt across Massachusetts and the nation. Seldom has the state experienced such a devastating blow. The fire claimed the lives of Lieutenant Thomas E. Spencer and firefighters Paul A. Brotherton, Timothy P. Jackson, Jeremiah M. Lucey, James F. Lyons, and Joseph T. McGuirk.

We are gathered here today to, once again, pay tribute to these fallen heroes and the families they left behind. Although it has been nearly a year since the tragedy, the pain and sorrow we all feel over the loss of these fine men is still with us. We will never forget. The memory of their supreme sacrifice will always be in our hearts. Our thoughts and prayers go out to their families.

Each year, we recognize those firefighters in our state who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to help their fellow citizens. This year's ceremony is being held in Worcester in honor of the six who died. These fallen brethren are the only recipients of this year's Medal of Honor, the highest award for firefighters in the state. Their actions on that cold night last December live up to the highest traditions of the fire fighting profession. The bravery and dedication they showed will forever be a reminder of the sacrifice and sense of duty that go along with being a firefighter.

I'd like to personally commend all those we are honoring today for the extraordinary dedication they have shown throughout the year. I know you would all say you were just doing your jobs, but you have demonstrated a commitment to duty that truly goes beyond expectation. For that we are grateful. Thank you very much.