

# New Bedford firefighters continue to Fill The Boot today

The following is a letter sent to New Bedford Guide by the New Bedford Firefighters Union President:

“We would like to shed light this morning to the inundation of posts, questions, texts, and calls regarding the events of yesterday and the interaction between our local police officers and our members.

There were questions raised by this city’s leadership to this Union Leadership as to the validity we had to continue to Fill the Boot for MDA at roadway intersections. A tradition started by Firefighters back in 1954 in South Boston and a multi-decades’ long tradition practiced by the members of the New Bedford Firefighters Union Local 841.

We are but one of approximately 140 communities across the State of Massachusetts that hosts MDA Fill the Boot events and it appeared we would be, if only for a few moments, the first to be denied the opportunity to continue. In that conversation, we informed them that we had every intention to continue our event as planned and scheduled through the weekend.

The New Bedford Police Chief issued a letter outlining sections of state law relative to stepping into traffic. In review of this letter, we were able to determine that the safety plan already in place by the professional leadership in the MDA along with our own directives given each member before going out to Fill the Boot covered the concerns put forward by the Police Chief. A directive was apparently issued to on-duty Police Officers to check up on our event to ensure we were complying with the guidance given by their Chief. Upon

providing a list of our members' names at the officer's request and the observations made by the officers on site, we were deemed to be following the guidelines given us. A shut down of our event NEVER occurred.

In the past 5 years, the New Bedford Firefighters Union has raised nearly \$160,000 for MDA, one of the largest Fill the Boot in all Massachusetts. The Professional Firefighters of Massachusetts have reached the Million dollar mark and across the International Association of Firefighters, the collective dollar is \$630 million. ALL to help kids in wheelchairs and the research that has helped some walk again. MDA helps kids and adults that suffer with muscle disease. Let us not lose sight of the greater good we can do. Supporting this event and YOUR local firefighters no matter what community you're in for the day is the right thing to do.

We appreciate our Brothers and Sisters of the New Bedford Police Department and continue to collaborate with them in all we do. Their Unions sponsorship of the Whaling City Festival has continued a family fun weekend needed for the many residents of our city. We thank them for offering the space within the park to expand our ability to raise monies for MDA with our dunk tank, T-shirt sales and Touch-a-Truck. Enjoy this weekend's event."

**Fill the boot continues today from 10am to 6 pm  
intersections of Routes 6 and 140  
Our Dunk Tank and Booth opens in the park at Noon  
This decades long tradition shall continue for years to come.**



*ALWAYS*  
on the front line  
for you...

Tom Carreiro  
President  
New Bedford Firefighters Local 841