Hauppauge, NY— On Saturday, Congressman Steve Israel joined the American Red Cross Suffolk County Chapter for a Gabrielle Giffords' Honorary Save-A-Life Saturday CPR and first aid training event.

"Anytime there is a tragedy, such as the shooting in Tucson or the disaster in Japan, we need to ask ourselves: are we prepared? Because we know that emergency preparedness saves lives," said Rep. Israel. "A Red Cross survey found that one in four people have found themselves in a situation where someone needed CPR. In Tucson, one intern's knowledge of first aid helped ensure my friend Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords' survival. I'm proud to join the Red Cross today to talk about the importance of emergency preparedness and what we can do in Congress and in our community to be ready for any situation."

On January 8, 2011, nineteen people – including Congresswoman Giffords (D – Arizona) – were shot, six fatally, at the Congresswoman's Congress on Your Corner event. The Red Cross will hold CPR and first aid classes at more than 100 locations across the country to honor those involved in the Tucson tragedy and to promote emergency preparedness.

President Obama proclaimed March as Red Cross Month, just as every president has since 1943. In Congress, legislation has been introduced to support first responders, to provide defibrillators in public schools, and to honor Congresswoman Giffords and the victims of the Tucson shooting.

A Red Cross survey given in 2010 found that one in four people (27%) have found themselves in a situation where someone needed CPR. Recent research also shows that if more people learned hands-only CPR, we could increase the likelihood of surviving cardiac emergencies that occur outside a hospital by putting more victims within a few steps of lifesaving assistance, according to the Red Cross.