Washington, DC (September 8, 2011) –Rep. Gus Bilirakis (FL-09) issued the following statement after learning that RPOF Chairman Dave Bitner passed away on Thursday:

"I was saddened to learn of Chairman Bitner's passing today as this is a tremendous loss for all of Florida. My thoughts and prayers go out to all of his friends and family members, especially his wife Wendy, and I wish them the best during this difficult time. Chairman Bitner and I served together in the state legislature, and I am privileged to have been able to get to know him and work with him. I will always remember him as an extraordinary colleague and even better friend, and hope that his sense of service continues to live on throughout the state of Florida."