

Washington, DC (December 15, 2011) – Rep. Gus Bilirakis (FL-09), a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Co-Chair of the House Hellenic Caucus and member of the International Religious Freedom Caucus, issued the following statement after the U.S. House of Representatives unanimously passed H.Res. 306 urging the Republic of Turkey to safeguard its Christian heritage and to return confiscated church properties:

"It has been my privilege to be a strong voice for oppressed religious minorities throughout the world," Bilirakis said. "I am pleased that my colleagues once again sent a strong message in support of religious freedom in a manner that transcends party politics by unanimously condemning Turkey for failing to safeguard its Christian heritage or return confiscated church properties."

"It is especially fitting that H. Res. 306 passed in the middle of the Advent season as we prepare for one of the highest Christian holidays of the year. I will continue to stand with those who seek nothing more than to simply be secure in their faiths, in their houses of worship, and in their religious communities."