

**Washington, DC (November 28, 2012)** – Yesterday, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act (H.R. 5997), legislation sponsored by Congressman Gus Bilirakis (FL-09), to ensure preparedness activities in times of disaster. Congressman Bilirakis, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response and Communications, introduced the legislation after a series of hearings, where emergency response personnel identified a need to stockpile medical countermeasures in the event of a WMD attack.

"Experts have repeatedly noted that the threat of a WMD attack is real. We must work to ensure plans, medication and equipment are available to protect the public, including emergency response providers, in the event of an attack. The legislation passed by the House today recognizes the continued importance of ensuring medical preparedness activities remain allowable grant uses. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate to get this bill signed into law."

The legislation does not authorize new funding. Rather, it clarifies that grant funds under the State Homeland Security Grant Program and Urban Area Security Initiative can be used to enhance medical preparedness and purchase medical countermeasures.