

**WASHINGTON (13 February)** – U.S. Rep. Gus M. Bilirakis (R-Fla.), representing Florida’s 9th Congressional District, today released the following statement after the House passed the Conference Report to H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act:

“Our nation is in recession and millions of Americans are hurting, which is why Congress should have put politics aside, and gotten this right.

“We began the 111th Congress with promises of change and smarter government; instead Congressional Democrats have produced a bill that does nothing to aid small businesses and will not spur economic growth according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office.

“Any stimulus must create jobs in a timely and targeted fashion. This so-called stimulus bill is simply a long wish list of big government spending that doesn’t meet that standard and will hand a huge ‘IOU’ to our children and grandchildren. It also must include rigorous oversight to ensure that this massive sum of taxpayer dollars is not wasted through mismanagement as with the bailouts that I opposed.

“I maintain that the best way to create economic growth is to allow the American taxpayers to keep more of their own money to spend. We should be enacting focused and timely tax relief which would create jobs and lower the burden on families and small businesses.

“The plan I supported would have created twice the jobs at half the cost for hard working Floridians, including 141,000 more jobs in Florida. It also did not include wasteful, untargeted pork that plagues the legislation passed by Congress today.”