

WASHINGTON (23 March) - U.S. Rep. Gus M. Bilirakis (R-Fla.), representing Florida's 9th Congressional District, has introduced bipartisan legislation, H.R. 1624: the Military Personnel Income Tax Exclusion Act, to improve active duty military pay and help military families during tough economic times. The legislation recognizes the superb commitment of service members and their families to our nation by providing a much needed reduction of their federal income tax. Congressman Chris Carney (D-Pa.), Chairman of the Homeland Security's Subcommittee Management, Investigations, and Oversight, joined Bilirakis in sponsoring the bill.

H.R. 1624 would exempt all active duty military personnel from paying federal income tax on his or her annual pay up to the first \$16,800. If enacted, the legislation would provide an across the board tax cut for all service members and result in a one-hundred percent tax cut for 66,000 of our force's lowest paid troops.

"In its first 50 days, Congress spent \$1 billion an hour. I believe we should take a couple of hours and cut taxes for our service members," said Bilirakis. "While the debt we owe our troops for their sacrifices can never be fully repaid, this tax cut would be a step in the right direction to show our appreciation for their enduring valor."

"Supporting and protecting our troops is not a partisan issue and that is why I am honored to be working across the aisle with Representative Bilirakis to co-sponsor the Military Personnel Income Tax Exclusion Act. This bipartisan bill cuts taxes across the board for our men and women in uniform and provides a powerful incentive for our best and brightest to continue serving in the armed forces," said Carney.

In addition to being an economic stimulant, the legislation would serve as an excellent recruitment and retention incentive for members of our Armed Services.

"It is critical for the continued growth and morale of our Armed Forces that we work toward improving military compensation," Bilirakis added. "This legislation will help our Armed Forces continue to attract the quality men and women who work so tirelessly to defend our freedom."