WASHINGTON (8 May) – U.S. Rep. Gus M. Bilirakis (R-Fla.), the only Florida member on the House Homeland Security Committee, today released the following statement in support of the confirmation of former Florida emergency management director Craig Fugate as administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA):

"With hurricane season just days away, it is imperative that FEMA have a proven leader at the helm. There is no question that Craig Fugate is the right man to head the agency that is so critical to my constituents in Florida as well as those residing in other Gulf Coast states.

"I understand that Senator Vitter has important questions about housing in southern Louisiana, but I believe these concerns would be best addressed with a tested emergency manager in place guiding the agency.

"We must ensure that our nation's disaster preparedness and response plans provide clear and consistent guidance to state and local officials as we enter into this critical time of year. We can achieve this by allowing the Senate to confirm Mr. Fugate as FEMA administrator."