

WASHINGTON (Sept. 26) -- On Wednesday, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs unanimously passed a bipartisan resolution introduced by U.S. Rep. Gus M. Bilirakis (R-Fla.), which supports the implementation of a United Nations-brokered agreement toward the reunification of Cyprus.

On July 8, 2006, Republic of Cyprus President Tassos Papadopoulos and Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat agreed to an UN-sponsored framework establishing a set of principles for the Greek and Turkish Cypriots to find common ground and ensure a lasting peace and eventual reunification.

Congressman Bilirakis, a member of the Committee and co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues, was pleased with the bipartisan support for his resolution and the prospect of Congress lending its support to the July 8 peace process.

"The Committee has acted decisively today to demonstrate its support for a constructive and transparent process toward a reunification of Cyprus," said Bilirakis. "The implementation of the July 8 Agreement would make it possible for a Cyprus that is unified under a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation with a single sovereignty, single international personality and single citizenship with respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all Cypriots."

H. Res. 405 acknowledges the key terms of the July 8, 2006 agreement, particularly the formation of a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation with territory allocated to the Greek and Turkish communities within a united Cyprus.

Bilirakis encouraged Speaker Pelosi to take up the measure before the full House and for both Cypriot leaders to take the initiative and move toward sustained progress in implementing the July 8th Agreement.

"More than 33 years after the division of Cyprus, it is important that both sides now move forward on a dialogue that can pave the way for a more sustainable and lasting peace," said Bilirakis. "I urge Speaker Pelosi to move this important resolution before the full House for a vote. It is now time for this Congress to act in expressing its support for the unification of Cyprus."

Co-sponsors of H. Res. 405 include: Rep. Andrews, Robert E. (D-NJ); Rep. Berkley, Shelley (D-NV); Rep. Brown, Henry E., Jr. (R-SC); Rep. Brown-Waite, Ginny (R-FL); Rep. Capuano, Michael E. (D-MA); Rep. Carnahan, Russ (D-MO); Rep. Crowley, Joseph (D-NY); Rep. Diaz-Balart, Lincoln (R-FL); Rep. Diaz-Balart, Mario (R-FL); Rep. Engel, Eliot L. (D-NY); Rep. Fortuno, Luis G. (R-PR); Rep. Fossella, Vito (R-NY); Rep. Franks, Trent (R-AZ); Rep. Gallegly, Elton (R-CA); Rep. Hinchey, Maurice D. (D-NY); Rep. Hodes, Paul W. (D-NH); Rep. Holt, Rush D. (D-NJ); Rep. Inglis, Bob (R-SC); Rep. Kennedy, Patrick J. (D-RI); Rep. King, Peter T. (R-NY); Rep. Lee, Barbara (D-CA); Rep. Maloney, Carolyn B. (D-NY); Rep. McCotter, Thaddeus G. (R-MI); Rep. Pallone, Frank, Jr. (D-NJ); Rep. Payne, Donald M. (D-NJ); Rep. Ros-Lehtinen, Ileana (R-FL); Rep. Roskam, Peter J. (R-IL); Rep. Sarbanes, John P. (D-MD); Rep. Sires, Albio (D-NJ); Rep. Space, Zachary T. (D-OH); Rep. Van Hollen, Chris (D-MD);

Rep. Watson, Diane E. (D-CA).