

## Congressman makes speech on House floor urging Congressional Leaders to help his constituents

April 23, 2007

**Washington, D.C.** - Congressman Gus M. Bilirakis (R-Palm Harbor) last Thursday spoke on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives calling on Congressional Leaders to consider bipartisan legislation which would help alleviate the homeowners' insurance crisis plaguing the Gulf Coast states. The following is an excerpt from that speech:

"Many of our states are plagued by natural disasters that cause millions - some times billions - of dollars in damage. As a result, homeowners' insurance rates have simply become unaffordable in many areas of the country. In far too many instances, these rates have tripled, forcing many to leave the areas they call home. For my state, and others in the Gulf Coast region, this has become the most financially crippling problem we have faced in years.

"My constituents have entrusted me to bring this issue into the national debate and come up with a solution. And yet, as we approach the beginning of another hurricane season, this body has failed to act. Earlier this month, it was predicted that we would have a "very active" hurricane season. Many of us who represent coastal states have tried to bring this issue to the forefront, but our attempts seem to have been in vain.

"Along with the numerous bills introduced in the House which would help alleviate this crisis, I introduced H.R. 913, the Hurricane and Tornado Mitigation Investment Act. My bill would provide tax incentives for individuals to better protect their property against these deadly storms. As a result of strengthening their homes and businesses to better withstand these disasters, homeowners' insurance rates would drop and my constituents could continue raising their families in the place they call home.

"I implore this Congress to consider my and other insurance-related bills to help these Americans in their time of need."

# # #