

**June 15, 2007**

**WASHINGTON** - U.S. Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-Fla.), member of the House Committee on Homeland Security, today introduced critical legislation that would allow Gulf Coast States (Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas) to pool their resources and jointly coordinate responses and preparation for major disasters.

**The Gulf Coast All-Hazard Readiness Act (H.R. 2704)** would allow the Gulf Coast States to form an interstate compact to mitigate, respond to and recover from major natural disasters. Under this legislation, participating states could establish an all-hazard fund to backstop funding for disaster recovery and ultimately alleviate some of the financial burden on the federal government.

“Interstate disaster mitigation and an appropriate cooperative strategy to handle a major, regional catastrophe will lessen final impact and, more importantly, save lives,” said Bilirakis. “This legislation would grant authority for state and local governments to more closely cooperate on preparing for and responding to disasters more effectively.”

Throughout his short time in Congress, Bilirakis has made it a priority to propose legislation that would improve the nation's disaster preparedness and address the skyrocketing cost of insurance for homeowners' in high-risk areas. Congressman Bilirakis also has encouraged his colleagues to support legislation that he has introduced (H.R. 913) that would allow tax credits for home and business owners who better strengthen their property for major wind damage.

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