

August 14, 2007

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-Fla.) will keep his promise to shave his head for the American Cancer Society's Southeast Hillsborough Unit on Friday, August 17, 2007, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Florida Center & Botanical Gardens located at the Florida State Fairgrounds.

"Inspired by two of our board members last year, Gus promised to shave his head if we met our fundraising stretch goal during the 2006-2007 fiscal year, and we did," said Mike Wick, Chairman of the American Cancer Society Southeast Hillsborough Unit Board. "We are thrilled because when Gus shaves his head and goes to his office in D.C., he will lead the way and bring more awareness to the U.S. Congress."

"It is important that we all continue to raise awareness and express our support for cancer research and informing the public about what we know about this disease," said Congressman Bilirakis. "I am pleased to play a small part in this effort by fulfilling my promise to shave my head after this group successfully met their fundraising challenge. Their work contributes to the positive work the American Cancer Society is doing throughout the United States."

Upon his return from a trip to the Middle East, Congressman Bilirakis will head straight to Florida for the event. On Friday, He will sit atop a professional barber's chair to be shaved by a local barber. Several members of his staff in both Washington, DC and Florida will also be joining in the Congressman's efforts by shaving their heads.

One of Bilirakis's staff members in particular, Legislative Director Jerry White of New Port Richey, views this effort as an opportunity to join in solidarity with his own father's struggle with prostate cancer. Diagnosed several months ago, his father has undergone aggressive radiation treatments and is currently awaiting further tests.

"I was really touched when Congressman Bilirakis told me that he was willing to shave his head because he believes so strongly in this cause," said White. "It seemed to me that shaving my head is a small price to pay to help raise awareness about the importance of cancer research and show support for the millions of people who are courageously fighting this disease and who desperately need to find better treatments, and hopefully one day, a cure for it."

If you would like more information about the event please contact the Southeast Hillsborough American Cancer Society office at 813-685-0670. Media can contact ACS Southeast Hillsborough Unit Media Chair Deg'er Saner at 813-651-3826 or Congressman Bilirakis's Communications Director John Tomaszewski at 202-225-5755.

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