

House Passes "Silver Alert" Legislation to Help Find Missing Seniors

National Silver Alert Act includes Bilirakis grant program

WASHINGTON (18 Sept.) — Late last night, the U.S. House of Representatives approved legislation (H.R. 6064) that includes key portions of a bill sponsored by U.S. Rep. Gus M. Bilirakis (R-Fla.) to create a federal grant program to help states establish silver alert notification systems to help find missing seniors.

"Today's vote is a victory in the fight to locate missing seniors," Bilirakis said. "Passage of this bill brings Florida and other states without these life-saving systems one step closer to improving their ability to find missing seniors in the crucial few hours after they go missing."

In April, Bilirakis introduced H.R. 5898, the Silver Alert Grant Program Act, which would create a federal grant program to help states establish and operate silver alert notification systems. This grant program is included in H.R. 6064. The entire Florida congressional delegation had cosponsored the Bilirakis silver alert grant program bill.

The bill passed today expands upon the Bilirakis bill by establishing a national silver alert communications network to assist regional and local missing persons search efforts and renewing a law that provides grants to public and non-profit organizations to help find abducted adults. The bill is the product of work by Bilirakis, Representative Lloyd Doggett (D-TX), and Congresswoman Sue Myrick (R-NC) on legislation to help locate missing persons.

"I am pleased that we were able to work in a bipartisan manner to pass this legislation," Bilirakis said, while highlighting the efforts of Clearwater's Mary Lallucci for bringing the issue of silver alerts to national prominence. Lallucci's mother disappeared from her care-giving facility earlier this year and drowned after driving into the Intercoastal Waterway. "Mary's determined advocacy for silver alert has inspired me and serves as a loving tribute to her mother's memory," Bilirakis said.

Bilirakis plans to press for passage by the Senate and enactment into law before Congress adjourns for the year.