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## Klein, House Pass Beach Protection Act

**Washington, D.C.** – U.S. Representative Ron Klein (FL-22), joined the majority of his colleagues in the House of Representatives to pass the Beach Protection Act of 2008 (H.R. 2537), which addresses the growing problem of beach pollution.

The legislation reauthorizes the BEACH Act of 2000 and increases its funding from \$30 million to \$40 million annually, enabling more beaches to receive federal grants to support beach pollution monitoring efforts. It will also allow states to use the funds to track and clean up the sources of beach-water pollution to prevent beach closings. The legislation also requires the implementation of rapid-testing technologies so that beachgoers can access information about the safety of their water in as little as two hours. The Beach Protection Act of 2008 passed the House by voice vote.

“The Beach Protection Act is critically important for South Florida and the millions of Americans who visit our coastal areas each year,” Klein said on the House floor. “Keeping our beaches open and thriving requires us to vigilantly fight pollution in our waters, and today’s legislation gives states the tools they need to do just that.”

Almost 2,700 beach advisory or closure days were issued due to pollution for the state of Florida in 2006, according to the Natural Resources Defense Council. Beach pollution often originates from contaminated stormwater or inadequately treated sewage, and the effects can range from ear infections and respiratory ailments to hepatitis and dysentery. For senior citizens, small children, and people with weak immune systems, the results of beach pollution can be deadly.

“With over seventy-five miles of coastline in Florida’s 22<sup>nd</sup> Congressional district, we rely heavily on our beaches to support both our economy and our unparalleled quality of life,” Klein said. “Today’s legislation will ensure those beaches are clean and safe for generations to come.”

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