

Rep. Bilirakis Calls for Clean Troop Supplemental Bill

WASHINGTON (4 June) – U.S. Rep. Gus M. Bilirakis (R-Fla.), representing Florida's 9th Congressional District, today issued the following statement amid reports that House and Senate Democrats have reached a tentative deal to include billions in aid for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank in a troop funding bill intended for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan:

"One of the most fundamental duties that we are charged with in Congress is to provide timely and ample funding for our troops. At a time when our nation's spending is raging out of control, the Majority has decided to attach unnecessary expenditures to a bill that should focus solely on funding our soldiers who are currently engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"We simply cannot afford to give billions of borrowed dollars to the IMF and World Bank which, in many cases, provides assistance to some of the world's worst regimes such as Iran. Congress must pass a clean supplemental appropriations bill to fund our war fighters, and I urge my colleagues to strip the IMF and World Bank funding from the final conference report."

Note: On May 14, Bilirakis supported the House-passed version of the Supplemental, which contained no funding for the International Monetary Fund and no language authorizing additional funding of the International Development Association, an arm of the World Bank. On Tuesday, Bilirakis signed a letter to House Appropriations Committee Chairman, David Obey (D-Wis.) urging that he ensure any funding for the IMF or World Bank that may ultimately be included in the conference report prevent these institutions from granting assistance to countries under U.S. sanctions for supporting terrorism, nuclear proliferation or significant human rights abuses, most notably Iran.