

## Rep. Bilirakis Supports Passage of Legislation Aimed at Veterans, Service Members and Their Families

WASHINGTON (20 May) — U.S. Rep. Gus M. Bilirakis (R-Fla.), member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, today joined with his colleagues in supporting several measures designed to improve the lives of veterans, military personnel and their families.

Among the bills considered by the House on Tuesday was legislation providing for a cost-of-living adjustment for disabled veterans and the survivors of certain deceased veterans; an expansion of substance abuse treatments and services offered to veterans; improved veterans access to emergency care at non-VA facilities; and restrictions on courts from changing custody arrangements on service members supporting a military operation.

"As we approach this Memorial Day weekend, we are reminded of the great sacrifices that have been made for our freedom by the brave men and women in our military," said Bilirakis. "This package of legislative initiatives will enhance and expand benefits and opportunities for our veterans, their families and military service members."

Congressman Bilirakis's efforts to bring a VA outpatient facility to the Brandon-area also gained traction on Tuesday, as the House passed H.R. 5856, which grants leasing authority to the VA for a multi-specialty outpatient clinic in Brandon, Fla. Bilirakis had previously placed language in the Fiscal Year 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act (P.L. 110-161), calling for a community-based outpatient clinic feasibility study in Brandon.