

House Holds Hearing on Silver Alert as Support Continues to Grow

This past Tuesday the House Judiciary subcommittee on crime, terrorism and homeland security conducted a hearing to examine various elder bills including H.R. 5898, the Silver Alert Grant Program Act of 2008.

The subcommittee received testimony at the hearing from Reps. Lloyd Doggett (D-TX) and Sue Myrick (R-NC) along with Gus ...

"My bill would establish a grant program within the department of Justice, allowing states to obtain needed funding to establish or make improvements to their Silver Alert notification systems, which help locate individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other dementia-related illnesses before they harm themselves or others.

I have secured strong bipartisan support for my bill since introducing it in April, including co-sponsorship by 86 of our colleagues, of which there are 49 Republican cosponsors and 37 Democratic ones. I am proud that the entire Florida congressional delegation also has cosponsored my measure, as have six members of the Judiciary Committee.

I believe that Florida and other states should establish alert systems similar to the highly-successful Amber Alert program to help find those suffering from dementia-related illnesses and prevent tragedies like the one that occurred in my community."

Earlier in the week the Charleston Daily Mail (West Virginia) ran an article detailing Congresswoman Shelley Moore Capito's advocacy of Gus' legislation ...

"We have an aging population and we need to have the infrastructure in place to protect our loved ones," Capito said. "We've seen the success of the Amber Alert System for our young people and now we have an opportunity to expand investment in a system to protect our seniors."

She made the announcement at a press conference Monday at the Hansford Senior Center in St. Albans, which has a caregiver respite program for Alzheimer's or dementia-related patients.

The bill, introduced by Congressman Gus Bilirakis, (R-Fla.), was in response to an Alzheimer's patient from his district.

"This is not a partisan issue," Capito added. "It's a great program for West Virginia and our seniors. It will become an additional plan that will help us track the elderly Alzheimer's patients. It's a great idea and it's good for everyone."