

Washington, DC -- Congressman Vern Buchanan has secured \$1.5 million in federal funding for important projects at Manatee Community College, Sarasota County, in the City of Bradenton and at Mote Marine. The funding sought by Buchanan was included in the House fiscal year 2009 "Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations Act" approved today by the House Appropriations Committee.

The FY09 bill includes \$200,000 for an Emergency Notification System Using VoIP at Manatee Community College.

"This equipment would provide the school with the ability to send emergency notices via text messaging, voice mail, and email," said Buchanan. "This is a very worthwhile investment that has the potential to save lives."

"There are safety and security concerns at all college campuses and the equipment to communicate with students and faculty and the entire campus is very expensive," said MCC President, Dr. Sarah Pappas. "With state budget cuts we are not able to do everything we should for the safety and security of our students and staff, so this would be wonderful."

Buchanan also secured \$600,000 for new equipment for Sarasota County's Emergency Operation Center.

"This would allow them to replace the county's current -- 30-year old 911 network with state of the art technology," said Buchanan. "The new equipment will enhance public safety by enhancing their ability to respond to emergencies."

"These federal dollars will help us move to "next generation" 911 emergency services communications, such as text messaging and e-mail," said Shannon Staub, Sarasota County Commission Chair. "The new network also will enable Sarasota County to instantaneously and seamlessly reroute emergency information to other regional centers."

The bill includes \$200,000 for a Police Cruiser In-Car Video system for City of Bradenton.

“The City of Bradenton has been on the cutting edge of technology,” said Mayor Wayne Poston. “This funding would add to our crime fighting tools by outfitting our cruisers with the latest equipment. What this will allow us to do is videotape arrests and take those videos into the courtroom, which places the defendants at the scene of the crime for judges or jurors.”

“This project not only protects the officer but helps prosecutors prove their cases in court and put away criminals,” said Buchanan.

The bill includes \$500,000 sought by Buchanan for the Science Consortium for Ocean Replenishment at Mote Marine.

“Mote Marine is a global leader in marine sciences,” said Buchanan. “This funding will support their efforts to increase our understanding of the sea and develop an economical and environmentally friendly fishery management strategy to replenish our nation’s critically depleted fisheries.”

Buchanan helped secure \$846,000 for the SCORE project in last year’s omnibus appropriations bill.

“This funding will help Mote and our partners at Florida Fish and Wildlife, the NOAA-NMFS lab in Seattle, the University of New Hampshire and the University of Southern Mississippi continue to play the leading role in the development and expansion of a responsible approach to stock enhancement in Florida and the United States,” said Dr. Kumar Mahadevan, President and CEO of Mote Marine Laboratory. “We thank Congressman Buchanan for his support and for helping Mote lead this important research to preserve and enhance saltwater sports fisheries.”