

Washington, DC -- Congressman Vern Buchanan (R-FL) today urged House leaders to include much-needed relief for Florida seniors in the economic growth bill being drafted by Congress.

“Senior citizens living on a fixed income are feeling the pressure of high prices and the slowing economy,” Buchanan wrote in a letter to Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Republican Leader John Boehner (R-OH). “Yet surprisingly, the bipartisan economic stimulus agreement ignores these older Americans.”

The 13th District Congressman noted that according to the AARP, under the proposed stimulus package approximately 20 million senior citizens living primarily on Social Security will not be part of the rebate check program.

“That’s wrong,” continued Buchanan. “These seniors are most likely to spend any additional income on necessary resources such as medicine, utilities, food and clothing -- offering a short-term infusion of money into our economy.”

“Soon congressional committees will begin their work on the proposed stimulus package. I ask that you ensure that our nation's low-and middle-income senior households are included among those Americans expected to benefit from the tax rebate program,” concluded Buchanan.

Buchanan’s five-point economic stimulus plan submitted to House leaders and the Bush Administration would eliminate the 1993 tax on Social Security benefits from 85 percent to 50 percent.

“Thankfully, Congressman Vern Buchanan and other forward-thinking Members are asking their Congressional Leaders to remember America's retirees and their critical role in the nation's economy. RetireSafe salutes their efforts to include older Americans in the economic stimulus package,” said RetireSafe President Michelle Plasari. RetireSafe is a grassroots network representing almost 400,000 older Americans nationwide.

Buchanan is a former businessman and the only Florida Member serving on the House Committee on Small Business.