

Washington, DC -- Congressman Vern Buchanan (R-FL 13) today released a list of his major accomplishments during his first year in Congress, including his successful effort to fund a national veterans cemetery in Sarasota, pass legislation to improve health care for wounded soldiers, and secure \$47 million in public improvement projects throughout the region. Buchanan also noted that total spending increased just three percent, which is in line with the President's budget request.

"I am proud of what we have been able to accomplish in one short year," said Buchanan. "I was told that as a freshman in the minority, I would find it difficult to get much done. But by building relationships and working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, I have been able to pass legislation to meet important local needs, while protecting taxpayers and holding the line on spending. Much more needs to be done. I look forward to building on these accomplishments next year."

The following Buchanan priorities were enacted and signed into law by the President:

- **Sarasota National VA Cemetery:** As a member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, Congressman Buchanan helped secure \$27.8 million in federal funding to build a new national veterans cemetery in Sarasota County.

- **Delivering Critical Federal Investments For Local Projects:** Congressman Vern Buchanan has secured more than \$47.5 million in federal funding for important public projects in Florida's 13th Congressional District, including \$4,680,888 for Manatee County's project to dredge Wares Creek in Bradenton, \$492,200 for Sarasota County's Phillippi Creek Septic System Replacement program, and \$367,500 for the City of Sarasota to help renovate and restore Newtown's Robert Taylor Community Center.

- **Protecting Florida's Taxpayers:** A Buchanan amendment to save Florida an estimated \$200 million in hurricane relief and recovery costs was signed into law by President Bush. Buchanan successfully amended the "Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Federal Match Relief Act" (H.R. 1144) to add Florida and Hurricane Wilma to legislation that would waive the state and local match to Louisiana and Mississippi for federal disaster assistance.

The following Buchanan legislation was passed by the House and Senate:

- **Soldier Patient Tracking System:** Congressman Buchanan wrote the bill creating a standard soldier patient tracking system to make available important information regarding the status of a patient's care and help cut through the red tape to ensure that our wounded soldiers get the first-class care they deserve in a timely manner.

The following Buchanan legislation was passed by the House and awaits Senate approval:

- Homeowner's Insurance More Affordable: The House of Representatives passed legislation that mirrors Buchanan's "Homeowners' Insurance Protection Act" to establish a federal reinsurance catastrophic fund to stabilize the insurance market and protect against increasing insurance rates.
- Funding For Red Tide: Congressman Buchanan helped pass legislation in the House to provide \$30 million to combat the problem of red tide in the district.
- Veterans' Small Business Legislation: The House twice-passed legislation authored by Buchanan to help veterans become successful small business entrepreneurs.
  
- Honoring Former U.S. Rep. Dan Miller: The House unanimously approved legislation introduced by Congressman Buchanan to name the Bradenton Main Post Office in honor of former Congressman Dan Miller.

Other Buchanan bills earning strong bipartisan support include the following:

- Balanced Budget Amendment: Congressman Buchanan introduced a bill to amend the U.S. Constitution and require Congress to balance the federal budget by 2012.
  
- Small Business Legislation: As Florida's only member of the House Small Business Committee, Buchanan authored legislation to make health care more affordable, streamline paperwork laws, provide tax relief, discourage frivolous lawsuits, and increase small business government contracts.
- Protecting Children: Buchanan is the author of the "Clay Moore Child Abduction Prevention Act" – legislation to help protect children from dangerous predators.
  
- Restrain Wasteful Spending: Congressman Vern Buchanan introduced legislation that would reform the way Congress spends taxpayer dollars and fix the abused "earmark process."
  
- Reducing Gang Violence: Buchanan introduced the "Gang Reduction, Investment and Prevention Act" – comprehensive legislation to improve gang prevention and enforcement efforts by providing significant resources for community-based gang prevention and intervention initiatives focused on at-risk and gang involved youth.
- Disabled Veterans Postal Stamp: Congressman Vern Buchanan has introduced bipartisan legislation expressing the sense of Congress that a commemorative postage stamp should be issued to honor our nation's disabled veterans.