

Washington, DC -- Congressman Vern Buchanan voted in favor of legislation in the House last night that include three projects important to Florida's 13th Congressional District. H.R. 1495, the "Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)" provides critical federal dollars for local water management and environment restoration projects, including beach renourishment at Lido Key Beach in Sarasota, maintenance dredging at Port Manatee, and Charlotte Harbor watershed management.

"Coastal erosion has been a long-term, persistent problem on Lido Key, threatening commercial and residential structures as well as public infrastructure," said Buchanan. "A significant portion of this erosion is, in fact, caused by New Pass, a federally-maintained channel which interferes with the natural long shore movement of sand. This funding will help maintain this local gem for enjoyment today and in the future."

The water resources bill provides \$9.3 million in federal funding to help pay for a \$15.1 million beach renourishment project at Lido Key Beach in Sarasota.

Alexandrea Davis Shaw, the City of Sarasota's Director of Engineering said, "Lido Beach is one of the jewels of Sarasota and the passage of the WRDA bill will help in the preserve this wonderful asset. Not only does Lido Beach provide recreational and scenic benefits but also provides protection to the adjacent structures and roadway and it is critical to Sarasota economy. The City has been working diligently for years to make this project a reality and is very pleased with the approval of this bill."

The WRDA bill also authorizes the Army Corps to perform maintenance dredging of Manatee Harbor.

"Port Manatee is one of Florida's largest deepwater ports and an economic engine that continues to grow in revenue and cargo," said Buchanan. "Harbor maintenance dredging is critical to the Port's continued success and its economic impact on the County and the region."

"Congressman Buchanan immediately understood how important maintenance dredging is to

the success of Port Manatee and to the community it serves. Passage of WRDA 2007 preserves the \$2.3 million annual economic impact the port has on Manatee County and for that, the entire port community is grateful for the congressman's leadership," said David McDonald, Port Manatee executive director.

Finally, the bill authorizes the Corps to assist the Southwest Florida Water Management District with their efforts to restore water quality, hydrology, and habitat in Charlotte Harbor.

"Charlotte Harbor is the second largest open water estuary in Florida and one of the most productive estuary systems in Southwest Florida, but its health has declined," said Buchanan. "The authorization in this bill will help protect and restore the vital natural resource."

"We thank Congressman Buchanan for his successful efforts to include this authorization in the bill," said David T. Rathke, Community & Legislative Affairs Director for the Southwest Florida Water Management District. "Our objective is to restore historic flows and improve the water quality, ecosystems, and aquifer recharge of the Peace River, which flows to Charlotte Harbor. This project is vital to the success of the district's Southern Water Use Caution Area Recovery plan."

As a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Buchanan helped craft H.R. 1495, which also includes authorization for major Everglades restoration projects. Congress has not passed a water resources reauthorization bill since 2000.