

Washington, DC -- U.S. Rep. Vern Buchanan has secured committee approval of language to provide the City of Sarasota with flexibility to use \$1.6 million in federal funds for improvements to 17th Street. The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee today passed H.R. 1195, which amends the “Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users” (SAFETEA-LU) to make technical and conforming changes, including language introduced by Buchanan on behalf of Sarasota.

“There has been a consensus for years that 17th Street in Sarasota is in need of improvements,” said Buchanan. “But not everyone could agree on how to address those needs. This correction will allow the City of Sarasota to enhance capacity, while addressing the concerns of area residents. Without the correction, the city risks losing the \$1.6 million in federal funding. ”

“We are pleased that the funds will still be allocated and used for this much needed roadway improvement project,” said Interim City Manager V. Peter Schneider. “Furthermore, we are extremely appreciative and grateful for the work Congressman Buchanan has done to make this possible.”

SAFETEA-LU was signed in to law in 2005. The bill included \$1.6 million to connect 17th Street from US 41 (Tamiami Trail) to Orange Avenue, making it a through street. The amendment allows the City of Sarasota to use the funds for a revised project to provide improvements to 17th Street at US 301.