

Washington, D.C. --Congressman Vern Buchanan (FL-13) announced today that a construction contract has been awarded to develop the Phase 1B portion for the new Sarasota National Cemetery. Buchanan wrote Veterans Administration (VA) Secretary Eric Shinseki in September urging him to take action to ensure that construction of the VA Cemetery in Sarasota, Florida, gets back on schedule.

“This is a very encouraging development for area families waiting to inter their loved ones in the new cemetery,” said Buchanan. “It represents significant progress in the effort to meet our obligations to area veterans.”

The construction award was originally scheduled for May of 2009 with a May 2011 completion date. However, four contractors that were initially awarded the contract were eventually disqualified for failure to meet essential elements of the bid criterion.

The contract has subsequently been awarded to Kadell Industries and C&C Contractors JV, a service disabled Veteran-owned business, amounts to \$15.9 million. The VA expects to break ground in late January or February of 2011 with a completion date of July or August of 2012.

“The 50 acre development will provide an additional eight years of burial services for the 398,7000 Veterans and eligible family members in the eight Florida countries surrounding the

Sarasota National Cemetery,” wrote Shinseki in his letter to Buchanan.

Phase 1B construction projects include: 11,500 crypt gravesites; 16,000 cremain sites; an administration building/public information center with electronic gravesite locator and public restrooms; maintenance complex; two committal service shelters; flag/assembly area; memorial wall; and avenue flags.

“Florida’s 13th Congressional District is home to more than 97,000 men and women who have served in our armed forces. This expansion will help ensure they are placed to rest close to home and with the honor and dignity they deserve. “