

Mahoney Helps Pass Legislation to Ease Passport Backlog

(July 16, 2007)

Washington, D.C. - Congressman Tim Mahoney (FL-16) today backed legislation in the House of Representatives to ease the backlog that has made it difficult for Americans to receive passports. The legislation was unanimously approved by the House on a voice vote.

"The passport backlog is an example of government red tape and poor planning at its worst. Our office has been inundated with calls from residents who are experiencing unacceptable delays in their passport applications. We have been proud to help many constituents get their passports in time to go on vacation or business trips, but it is clear that further action is needed. This bill will allow the State Department to hire retired former staffers to help process passport applications and ease the backlog," said Congressman Tim Mahoney.

Passport requests skyrocketed following the implementation of a new law requiring Americans traveling by air to Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Bermuda to hold a passport. The increase has resulted in significant delays with many waiting months to receive a passport.

The Passport Backlog Reduction Act gives the State Department the authority to hire retired former staffers who are trained and authorized to process passport applications. Current law denies retirement benefits to these retirees if they exceed strict wages earned and hours worked caps. The legislation approved by the House waives these requirements and makes it possible for the retired workers to return to work and help ease the passport shortage.

Congressman Mahoney's office has already assisted a number of residents who have had difficulty obtaining a passport. Any resident in Florida's 16th District needing assistance with a delayed passport application can contact Congressman Mahoney's office at 772-878-3181.

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