

Mahoney Statement on President Bush's Fiscal Year 2009 Budget

Mahoney Criticizes Lack of Indian River Lagoon Funding

(February 4, 2008)

(Stuart, FL) - Congressman Tim Mahoney (FL-16) issued the following statement today in response to President Bush's Fiscal Year 2009 Budget:

"The President's budget demonstrates that he continues to be out of touch with the values and priorities of the American people," said Congressman Mahoney. "I am disappointed at the President's decision to only fund \$4.5 million for the Indian River Lagoon Project (IRL) in fiscal '09. This is well below the \$17 million the Corps of Engineers has indicated they could responsibly use to begin the project and is so small as to make IRL financially unfeasible. I am pleased that the budget fully funds the Corps projected \$24.5 million in start-up costs for the Picayune Strand project, located in a Republican district, however, I can only conclude that the President is playing favorites in an election year by not funding the Indian River Lagoon, a project that is much bigger and has a far greater impact on Florida's economy."

"I applaud the President's commitment to add an additional 2,200 border guards, but he is achieving it in part by completely eliminating the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP), a reimbursement program designed to provide federal assistance to sheriffs and other local law enforcement for capturing and processing illegal aliens," said Mahoney. "As our sheriffs are our first line of defense for protecting our beaches and our local communities, we have seen an increase in crime nationally due to illegal immigration and we need the funding to support local law enforcements efforts."

"A budget is a statement of the author's values and priorities. The President clearly demonstrates that he doesn't care about increasing the burden of debt on our children, he is committed to staying the course in Iraq and he does not believe that we need to protect our economy by investing in infrastructure and education here at home. I promise to work over the coming weeks to pass a budget that focuses on winning the War on Terror, controlling our borders and giving our sheriffs and first responders the resources they need to protect our communities and making sure that the Indian River Lagoon gets the funding we need to ensure that the economy here on the Treasure Coast no longer has to suffer," said Mahoney.

The President released his \$3 trillion budget this morning, the biggest in our nation's history. The President's budget increases the national debt by over \$400 billion for Fiscal 09, which is a significant increase over the President's "high watermark" in 2007 when the debt increased by \$167 billion. The President's emphasis is on increased funding for the War in Iraq where he proposes a 7.5% increase or \$515 billion for the year, while cutting funding for transportation, water resources and education programs to name a few of over 50 major budget cuts.

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