

Mahoney Solves Visiting Teacher Dilemma

Congressman gets Assurance Teachers are being Treated Fairly

(February 20, 2008)

(Port St. Lucie, FL) - Congressman Tim Mahoney (FL-16) held a meeting this afternoon with the 16 visiting teachers who were pulled from classrooms because of a visa error. The Congressman and teachers were joined by St. Lucie County Superintendent Mike Lannon, FAU Professor of Exceptional Education Dr. Rangasamy Ramasamy, and FAU President Frank Brogan sent a statement.

The meeting was held to announce the State Department's decision to extend the visas through June. Congressman Mahoney inquired if the teachers were finding their time in the U.S. productive and was met with an enthusiastic positive response. The teachers expressed their appreciation of this opportunity and the importance of international exposure.

"We are very happy to see these individuals return to the classroom and continue through the end of the school year the exceptional work they started with St. Lucie County students through this exceptional program," said FAU President Frank T. Brogan. "We are thankful to the host of dedicated public and private citizens who lent their support that manifested itself in this positive outcome. We welcome the teachers back to their classrooms, and we remain dedicated to their success."

"Today's announcement of the visa extensions is a success for students, teachers, community and the world at large," said Congressman Tim Mahoney. "After meeting with the teachers today, I am proud to be part of a country where we can attract such fine people to not only teach our students, but to share their values and cultures."

"The St. Lucie County Schools family is thrilled to know that these 16 fine educators will be returning to our classrooms, hopefully this week," said Superintendent Michael Lannon. "We truly appreciate the involvement of Congressman Tim Mahoney and his office, in spearheading and expediting the resolution to the visa error, and the efforts of Florida Atlantic University, President Frank Brogan and his staff to ensure these outstanding individuals would be able to continue in this unique program. Our students are the ultimate benefactors," he added.

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