

Mahoney Keeps Promise to Crack Down on Convicted Immigrant Felons

Introduces Bill to Keep Violent Criminals that Can't be Deported in Jail

(September 9, 2008) (Washington, D.C.)—In the wake of the shooting death of Officer Andrew Widman by a convicted felon immigrant, Congressman Tim Mahoney (FL-16) announced today that he has introduced the Officer Andrew Widman Criminal Alien Enforcement Act of 2008, to ensure that immigrants convicted of a felony that pose a threat to the community will not be released from detention. Mahoney developed the legislation after being approached by community and law enforcement officials deeply troubled by the nation's broken immigration laws that contributed to Officer Widman's death.

"The tragic death of Officer Widman revealed major flaws in our immigration laws," said Congressman Mahoney. "I am proud to keep my promise to the community by introducing this legislation, which puts teeth behind our immigration laws and ensures that convicted immigrant felons who can't be deported stay in jail and off our streets. We must make sure that what happened to Officer Widman and his family never happens again." On July 18th, Fort Myers police officer Andrew Widman was killed by Abel Arango, a Cuban immigrant who had been convicted of multiple felonies. Arango was arrested and convicted and served three years in prison for armed robbery. When Immigration officials could not deport him to Cuba, he was released without supervision. Earlier this year, Arango was for selling cocaine and was released on bond. During a domestic dispute, Arango shot and killed Officer Widman. Mahoney's legislation would strengthen immigration laws by amending the Immigration and Naturalization Act to ensure that immigrants who are unable to be deported and who are determined to be threats to society remain in jail. Additionally, convicted felon immigrants will be placed under the jurisdiction of the federal government and will remain under federal supervision.