

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**HOUSE APPROVES DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT WITH \$4 MILLION
SOUGHT BY STEARNS FOR LOCAL DEFENSE PROJECTS**

**PROVIDES \$19.1 BILLION INCREASE AND FULLY FUNDS 2.2% MILITARY
PAY RAISE**

WASHINGTON, JUNE 20, 2006 - "The War on Terror takes our military personnel around the world in dangerous deployments and we owe them the training, supplies, and equipment needed to complete their missions," stated Rep. Cliff Stearns (R-Ocala). This bill provides \$19.1 billion more in defense spending over last year's level and fully funds the 2.2% military pay raise. In addition, it provides \$4 billion for two area projects in support of our military."

The House approved H.R. 5631, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, which provides \$377.6 billion in defense spending plus \$50 billion for military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. "Brain injury is the second largest cause of death for our troops on the battlefield, and I am proud to have secured \$2 million for ongoing research in developing a non-invasive blood test that rapidly diagnoses the severity of traumatic brain injury," explained Stearns. "This research is conducted by Banyan Biomarkers of Gainesville in cooperation with the University of Florida. H.R. 5631 also includes \$2 million for ballistic missile defense research conducted by Vicus Technologies of Ocala. Vicus is developing thermal protection materials capable of withstanding the severe heating during the flight of the missile defense vehicle."

Added Stearns, "This measure includes \$50 billion in emergency funding for ongoing military operations. It provides \$1.5 billion to counter improvised explosive devices (IEDs), a major threat to the men and women of the armed forces, and an additional \$725 million for protecting military personnel with body armor and other protections."

For Further Information

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