

Cong. Rothman Helps Secure \$ 85.2 Billion for Veterans' & Armed Forces' Quality of Life Programs

For Immediate Release

Contact: Brice Peyre

Phone: 201-646-0808

CONG. ROTHMAN HELPS SECURE \$85.2 BILLION FOR VETERANS' & ARMED FORCES' QUALITY OF LIFE PROGRAMS

(Washington, DC) In his continuing effort to help America's veterans and troops, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-Fair Lawn) today helped to secure \$85.2 billion in federal funds to improve the quality of life for America's heroes from recruitment to retirement. Rothman spoke on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives in favor of the Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill and voted for the bill, which provides funding for the Department of Defense's military housing construction projects and the Department of Veterans Affairs in the Fiscal Year 2006 budget. The measure was subsequently approved by the House by a vote of 425 to 1.

Representative Rothman expressed his appreciation to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee as well as to their staff for the diligence and dedication they demonstrated throughout the appropriations process, particularly in view of pressing budget constraints. Notwithstanding his praise for what the bill accomplished, Rothman went on to note that, with a Democratic majority in the House, more funding would have been allocated to these and other veterans' programs.

"I want to thank Chairman Walsh and Ranking Member Edwards for their hard work drafting this well-balanced bill," Representative Rothman said. "I can appreciate the tough choices that the Committee had to make with the tight [veterans' and armed forces' quality of life] budget imposed upon them [by the President and Republican majority]."

The Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill allocates \$21 billion for veterans' medical services and provides funding to veterans in VA medical centers, outpatient clinics, contract hospitals, and state homes. The bill also allocates \$2.2 billion for specialty mental health care-including a 200% increase in funding for veterans' mental health research. The funds will be used to expand research on certain mental illnesses and disorders, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, which affects many troops returning home from combat.

The Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill is one of 11 spending measures Congress is required to pass each year. This legislation will next be considered by the U.S. Senate and then moves to the White House where President Bush is expected to sign the bill into law.