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Kathy Castor
Contact:

Castor Pushes for Funding for Air Force Base Infrastructure, Health Care Research

Washington, May 12 -

Congresswoman Kathy Castor successfully amended the National Defense Authorization Act to improve the prospects for local job creation as the House Armed Services Committee passed the bill out of committee early today. The Castor amendments provide additional funding for national air force base infrastructure and health care research that can be leveraged for MacDill Air Force Base, the University of South Florida, and the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute. Castor also authored a specific commendation to the Special Operations personnel for the successful and historic mission to bring Osama bin Laden to justice.

“MacDill Air Force Base and defense-related research at the Moffitt and USF are vitally important to the economic growth of the Tampa Bay area. The service members, families and related businesses at MacDill Air Force Base keep our country safe and are valued members of our community,” Castor said. “These measures, approved by the full House Armed Services Committee, will help ensure our military community has the resources, tools and health care they need to protect our country.”

Castor Amendment: Provide an additional \$10 million for functional genomics research to further develop cancer treatments and detection methods:

In previous years, Castor has secured funding for the National Functional Genomics Center at the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute to find ways to detect and treat cancer in its earliest stages and to develop new drug therapies and diagnostic tests. Moffitt’s national leadership puts it in good position to be able to compete for additional funding.

Castor amendment: Provide an additional \$5 million for university-led applied research in chemical and biological defense.

The University of South Florida’s Center for Biological Defense conducts laboratory research on bioterrorism and emerging infections. USF will be a top competitor for additional funding for this initiative based upon this increase.

Castor amendment: Invest an additional \$2 million for researchers to further the development of healthcare informatics tools to support clinical care.

The University of South Florida’s Health Informatics Initiative, which is the science that underlies the academic investigation and practical application of computing and communications technology to healthcare, health education and biomedical research, has been a collaboration between the USF College of Medicine, College of Nursing, College of Public Health and the Haley VA Hospital. The history and collaboration should make them very competitive for additional investment.

Castor amendment: Invest an additional \$10 million for construction at Air Force facilities.

Locally, MacDill Air Force Base has severe infrastructure demands, and making additional funding available

for the Air Force might help expedite already-approved construction projects such as a new CENTCOM parking structure, mission support facilities or updated base housing.

“MacDill Air Force Base is one of the top employers and largest economic engines in our community,” Castor said. “Investing in infrastructure at the base pays dividends for our community’s economy and jobs.”

Castor amendment: Recognize those members of the U.S. Armed Forces responsible for killing Osama bin Laden.

Although House Speaker John Boehner did not agree to proceed with a House of Representatives resolution honoring the service members and intelligence officers who were instrumental in the Osama bin Laden mission, unlike the U.S. Senate, Castor added an amendment to ensure that the 2011 NDAA *did* contain a specific commendation. The measure, in particular, salutes the service of SOCOM and CENTCOM. SOCOM and CENTCOM, based at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, have been leading the critical missions involving al Qaeda and other terrorists for almost 10 years.

“Our special forces and all who were instrumental in the historic mission deserve this recognition for bringing Osama bin Laden to justice and protecting the American people.”