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Congressman Barrow Secures an Extra \$10 Million in Immigration Enforcement Funds

House approves Barrow's amendment to the 2007 Science, State, Justice, and Commerce Appropriations Act; increases reimbursement funds for state and local police

Washington, DC – As National Guard troops prepare to man portions of the nation's southern border with Mexico in an effort to stem the flood of illegal immigrants flowing into the United States, the U.S. House of Representatives today approved a measure by 12th District Georgia Congressman John Barrow (D-Savannah) to add an additional \$10 million in funding to reimburse state and local police for their costs associated with incarcerating undocumented criminal aliens.

“We all know that the explosion of illegal immigrants is imposing a huge cost on local schools and hospitals,” Barrow said. “But it's also imposing a huge new cost on local law enforcement. One result has been the expansion of our state and local law enforcement's authority to investigate, arrest, and jail undocumented criminal aliens.”

“When we expand the authority of state and local police, we also need to expand the resources they need to get the job done,” Barrow continued. “It's unfair to ask our states and local communities to divert funds from crime fighting and emergency response in order to pay for our failure to keep criminal aliens out of our country.”

Barrow's amendment adds \$10 million in additional funding to the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP). Created in 1994, SCAAP is a federal grant program that provides financial assistance to state and local law enforcement agencies for the costs they incur in jailing undocumented criminal aliens. Between 1997 and 2005, SCAAP has provided over \$4.1 billion in financial assistance to states. Last year, the State of Georgia received \$1.8 million in SCAAP funding.

Barrow's amendment pays for the additional \$10 million in SCAAP funding by offsetting \$10 million from the account that pays membership fees to the U.N. and other international organizations.

“We need to do a better job dealing with criminals in our own neighborhoods before dealing with the problems of other countries,” Barrow said.

Congressman Barrow's SCAAP funding amendment was passed unanimously by voice vote.

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