



For Immediate Release: April 26, 2006

## **Congressmen Barrow & Marshall Announce \$973,350 Grant for Tri-County Health System, Inc., Facilities in Warrenton, Sparta, Gibson, and Crawfordville**

*Funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Will Help Improve Access to Rural Health Care Services*

**Washington DC** – Georgia Congressmen John Barrow (12<sup>th</sup> District) and Jim Marshall (3<sup>rd</sup> District) today announced that the Tri-County Health Care System, Inc., facilities in Warrenton, Sparta, Gibson, and Crawfordville, have been awarded a \$973,350 grant from the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The money will help provide funding for those four facilities through 2011.

Tri-County Health Care System, Inc., is part of the Area Health Education Centers Program (AHEC), created by Congress in 1971 to encourage more students and residents to receive their training in rural and underserved communities. Each year, AHEC centers train close to 30,000 health care students at community health care sites within underserved areas across the country.

The facilities in Warrenton, Sparta, Gibson, and Crawfordville help train students from the Medical College of Georgia.

“Increasing access to affordable, quality health care is incredibly important to small towns and rural communities all across Georgia,” Barrow said. “This grant will help these health care facilities continue to offer health care to local residents, and offer critical training for the doctors who will provide care in rural Georgia for generations to come.”

“Rural healthcare is critically important to Middle Georgia, and ensuring that our rural health care facilities stay open has been one of my key priorities from day one,” Marshall said. “I’m pleased to see this program will continue to receive federal funding. Without a good healthcare delivery system in place, rural counties won’t be able to keep healthy workers – a must for any economic development.”

Under its classification as a Community Health Center, Tri-County facilities help maintain local access to comprehensive primary and preventative health care, as well as improve the overall health within the population they serve. They work to ensure the availability and accessibility of essential services such as oral health, mental health, and substance abuse services to all individuals in the service area. By combining these valuable services with education and training resources for future health professionals, Tri-County creates a strong foundation for better quality health care throughout rural Georgia.

###

Rep. Barrow contact: Harper Lawson, (202) 225-2823

Rep. Marshall contact: Doug Moore, (202) 225-6531