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Uses Position On House Appropriations Subcommittee On Foreign Operations
To Obtain \$4.5 Million More Than Bush Administration Requested,
Vows To Push For An Even Greater Level Of Aid

Washington, DC - Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ) used his position on the powerful House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations to help secure \$12 million in United States economic aid to Cyprus, restoring the significant cut in assistance for Cyprus that President Bush proposed in his budget request to Congress. The funds are part of the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2004, which Rothman and his colleagues on the full House Appropriations Committee approved today.

"While I am pleased that the bill the House Appropriations Committee approved today includes \$12 million for Cyprus, an increase of \$4.5 million above President Bush's request, I believe the United States needs to do more to help our dear friend and ally," Rothman said. "As this measure moves along legislatively I will work to increase that level of aid to \$15 million, which is the amount that Cyprus very much needs and has received in past years,"

In President Bush's Fiscal Year 2004 budget request submitted to Congress earlier this year, only \$7.5 million was included for Cyprus. That figure is down from \$15 million in Fiscal Year 2003 and previous years.

"The Bush Administration's decision to cut assistance to Cyprus at this time is short-sighted," Rothman said. "Cyprus is on the brink of joining the European Union, while still facing obstacles to its reunification due to Turkish Cypriot Leader Rauf Denktash's unwillingness to negotiate. U.S. assistance promotes peace and builds confidence through education and bi-communal projects, which are essential for the success of any peace plan."

Rothman is a member of the bipartisan Congressional Hellenic Caucus, which focuses attention on issues of concern to Greek Americans, specifically regarding Greece and Cyprus.

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