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House Passes Kosmas Amendment to Help Bring Defense Work to the Space Coast

Defense Authorization Bill Also Protects Air Force Technical Applications Center at Patrick Air Force Base

(Washington, DC) –Today, **Congresswoman Suzanne Kosmas (FL-24)** successfully passed an amendment to help bring Department of Defense (DoD) work to Cape Canaveral in order to protect the Space Coast’s highly-skilled workforce. Kosmas’ amendment, which was included in the *National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2011* (H.R. 5136), would direct the Department of Defense to work with NASA to study the feasibility of joint usage of the NASA Shuttle Logistics Depot (NSLD) and to report back within 90 days.

The joint usage would provide new opportunities for the existing workforce at the NSLD, who currently service and fabricate Space Shuttle hardware, to refurbish DoD equipment returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. The facility could also take part in developing innovative manufacturing technology and processes to improve Defense product procurement and reduce risk, cost, and cycle time of system delivery. The partnership would help protect Space Coast jobs while utilizing the unique skills and capabilities of the workforce to alleviate the refurbishment backlog of military equipment and to improve Defense procurement processes.

“Matching the unique capabilities of the Space Coast’s highly-skilled workforce with needed Department of Defense work is a common-sense solution that will protect jobs and help diversify our local economy,” said Suzanne Kosmas. **“This amendment will help us take another step towards these new opportunities by clearly demonstrating the cost-effectiveness of bringing Defense work to the NSLD.”**

Pilot manufacturing programs on equipment such F-16 aircraft parts and M2 50 machine gun barrel pieces have already been conducted at the NSLD, but an official study on the joint operation of the depot by DoD and NASA is needed to move forward.

In addition to her amendment, the NDAA includes funding Kosmas fought for to construct a new facility for the Air Force Technical Applications Center (AFTAC) at Patrick Air Force Base. AFTAC, which operates the United States Atomic Energy Detection System (USAEDS), a worldwide nuclear detection system, had been in danger of being relocated to another state, but Kosmas sent a letter to House Armed Services Committee members encouraging them to replace the existing 50-year-old facility and to maintain the Center on the Space

Coast. Moving the Center would have resulted in the loss of several hundred civilian and contractor jobs and the potential loss of the facility's \$119 million local economic impact.

“AFTAC’s unique mission is critical for America’s national security,” said Kosmas. **“Maintaining the Center on the Space Coast and replacing the outdated facility will protect jobs, boost the economy, and keep the AFTAC team in place so they can continue their work to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.”**

The *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011* (NDAA) makes investments in our nation's military, authorizing a budget to further strengthen our national security, provide our men and women in uniform with the tools they need to do their jobs, and take care of our service members and their families. The legislation provides resources to strengthen counterterrorism efforts at home and abroad and strengthens our nation's missile defense and nuclear nonproliferation efforts. The bill provides a 1.9 percent pay raise to the troops, increases family separation allowance for service members who are deployed away from their families, and expands college loan repayment benefits. It also allows military families to extend TRICARE coverage to their dependent adult children until age twenty-six.

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