



# Congressman Bud Cramer

March 2003  
E-Newsletter

The House of Representatives was busy during the month of February, most notably passing a \$397 billion Omnibus Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2003. In the aftermath of the Space Shuttle Columbia tragedy, Congress was able to provide NASA with a substantial funding increase as well as money for the investigation. We also provided some funding for important projects that will be a boost for North Alabama's economic development. For more information, please see my press releases at [www.house.gov/cramer/news\\_press\\_releases](http://www.house.gov/cramer/news_press_releases).

Bud Cramer

## Washington Update

On February 13<sup>th</sup>, the House of Representatives passed the **Fiscal Year 2003 Omnibus Appropriations bill**, providing funding for all non-defense federal agencies. The appropriation provides \$397 billion for these agencies. Cramer secured over \$50 million for Alabama in the Omnibus. The bill also contains \$3.1 billion in assistance to farmers who experienced weather related losses in the 2001 or 2002 crop, an increase in Medicare payments to physicians, \$3.9 billion for intelligence activities and \$6.1 billion for military operations in Afghanistan.

The FY03 Omnibus boosts **NASA's budget** by \$513 million to \$15.4 billion and provides \$50 million for the investigation of the Shuttle accident. Cramer also secured funding for important projects in North Alabama that will benefit our transportation, economic development, law enforcement, education and other community resources.

Other legislation the House of Representatives approved in February:

- H.Res. 51 - Expressing the condolences of the House of Representatives to the Families of the Crew Members of the **Space Shuttle Columbia Mission**.
- H.R. 395 - "**Do-Not-Call Implementation Act**" that would require the FTC to set up and maintain a national registry of consumers who do not wish to be called by telemarketers. The service would be free to consumers, but cost telemarketers \$11,000 each time they violate the registry.
- H.Res. 62 - Recognizing the courage and sacrifice of those members of the United States Armed Forces who were held as **prisoners of war** during the Vietnam conflict and calling for a full accounting of the 1,902 members of the Armed Forces who remain unaccounted for from the Vietnam conflict.

## District Update

On February 14<sup>th</sup>, Cramer announced at his Huntsville office that he will serve as Ranking Member, or the top Democrat, on the House Intelligence Committee's **Subcommittee on Technical and Tactical Intelligence**. Through this leadership position, he will be able to work more with our national intelligence agencies as well as the Missile and Space Intelligence Center at Redstone Arsenal.

The Omnibus Appropriations Bill contained good news for North Alabama. Cramer secured funding for many projects in the Tennessee Valley including \$3 million for the Intermodal Facility at the Huntsville International Airport and \$2.175 million for the National Children's Advocacy Center in Huntsville. On February 24<sup>th</sup>, Cramer was in the Shoals to announce over \$2.6 million for Northwest Alabama economic development projects and in Athens to present a \$50,000 check to the Limestone County Sheriff's Department for technology and equipment upgrades.

Cramer encourages all schools with 50% or more students that qualify for the National School Lunch Program as well as community agencies that serve individuals at or below the poverty level to apply for a Beaumont Foundation grant for technology. For more information or to apply for the grants, please visit [www.bmtfoundation.com/grants](http://www.bmtfoundation.com/grants).