



Congressman Bud Cramer

April 2004
E-Newsletter

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April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. I believe that the battle against child abuse is one that we all must fight together. It has almost been twenty-years since we opened the first Children's Advocacy Center in Huntsville. In 1985, I was the District Attorney for Madison County and saw first-hand how child abuse victims were treated in the judicial system. These children were transferred from building to building and forced to recount their horrible stories time and time again. I knew that we could do a better job of helping these children and the idea for the first children's center was born. Today there are over 500 children's centers across the nation and I am very proud of everyone who works on the front-line of child abuse prevention and awareness everyday. They have taken the original CAC model and expanded it to meet the changing needs of child abuse prevention. Please join me in the fight against Child Abuse.

Bud Cramer

Washington Update

This month, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users. This bill included funding for numerous projects in North Alabama. Cramer said, "This bill is an opportunity for me to help our area improve its infrastructure. In addition to helping reduce traffic problems, a strong infrastructure is a critical tool in the recruitment of future businesses to North Alabama." The TEA-LU bill is now in "conference" to reconcile the difference with the Senate's version of the bill. The North Alabama projects included in the bill were:

- \$10 million for the Patton Island Bridge Corridor connecting Lauderdale and Colbert Counties.
- \$3 million for the Huntsville Southern Bypass.
- \$2 million for the Decatur/Hartselle Southern Bypass.
- \$1 million for the Interchange at I-65 and Limestone County Road 24.

Also in April, Congressman Cramer joined Congresswoman Jane Harman, Ranking Member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and other Democratic Members of the Intelligence Committee to announce legislation that would improve our nation's intelligence operations. The Intelligence Transformation Act would consolidate intelligence collection techniques, enable the sharing of information among agencies, and establish clear guidelines for creating intelligence estimates and alternative analysis. This legislation also creates the position of Director of National Intelligence, separate from the CIA Director, to coordinate, direct, and organize all of our nation's intelligence operations.

During an April 1st hearing of the VA-HUD and Independent Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, Congressman Cramer questioned the Veterans Affairs Secretary, Anthony Principi, on the VA's inability to provide a timely response to veterans' claims. "We owe a great deal to our veterans," said Cramer. "We must ensure that our veterans have access to the affordable health care and other benefits they have been promised."

Also on April 1st, Congressman Cramer discussed rural telecommunication concerns with Michael Powell, the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission. Chairman Powell appeared in front of the Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Appropriations Subcommittee of which Congressman Cramer is a member. Cramer said, "Our nation is evolving into a highly technical and digital place. I represent a district that includes many rural areas and unfortunately they do not have the capabilities to make this transition. I used my time in this hearing to raise my concerns with Chairman Powell and hear his ideas on how to decrease the digital divide."

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District Update

Pictured to the right, Congressman Cramer and Alabama Governor Bob Riley visited the Shoals to view the progress of the Patton Island Bridge and to discuss what needs to be done to finish the project. Cramer said, "Governor Riley is a friend to North Alabama. He understands that the federal and state governments must partner on many things, including this project." Riley added, "We are committed to this. When you see something as impressive as the Patton Island bridge, then see a dead end, it's not good usage of state money." (Photo courtesy of Matt McKean/TimesDaily)



Congressman Cramer hosted a Washington update luncheon with the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce in Scottsboro. Cramer updated Chamber members on his work for North Alabama through his Intelligence and Appropriations Committee assignments, economic development, veterans affairs, and other issues important to Northeast Alabama.



Also this month, Cramer presented a \$200,000 check to Girls Incorporated of Huntsville to support its programs. Cramer said, "Girls Incorporated has created programs that raise young girls' self-confidence and prepare them for a successful future," said Cramer. "I believe that Girls Inc. is a quality program that teaches young women that they can contribute to our community and help make a difference not only in their own lives but also in the lives of others." (Pictured to the Left)

On April 5th, Congressman Cramer joined officials from Madison County to present a \$100,000 check to the Madison County Commission for the construction of the Woody Anderson Library. Cramer secured this funding in the FY 2004 Consolidated Appropriations Act. "Monrovia is the fastest growing and largest unincorporated area in North Alabama," said Cramer. "A good library is critical for our children's education and for the future of this community."

Pictured to the right, Congressman Cramer visited the Northwest Alabama Children's Advocacy Center this month to view the progress of the center's renovation project and to present a \$100,000 check to support its critical programs. Congressman Cramer secured this funding for the current budget year. The Shoals area has made a strong commitment to the Children's Advocacy Center and has supported its growth," said Cramer. "This funding could not have come at a better time for this center."



Cramer also presented a \$70,000 check to the Lawrence County Sheriff's Office this month. Lawrence County will use this funding to help fight the methamphetamine epidemic in Lawrence County.

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