

WASHINGTON – Shortly after being sworn in for a sixth term in Congress on Tuesday, U.S. Rep. Spencer Bachus (R-AL) re-introduced legislation he first proposed two years ago to help cities and counties build tornado-safe shelters for mobile home residents.

"There should be no legitimate objection to this proposal. My bill doesn't create a new government program. It simply levels the playing field so mobile home communities qualify for storm shelters, just as other communities already do," said Bachus.

"Almost 70 percent of the Americans killed by tornadoes in 2002 were killed in mobile homes," said Bachus. "The only way to save the lives of these vulnerable citizens is to provide a shelter from the storm.

"Under current law, there are existing federal programs that help provide shelters and safe rooms for site-built homes, apartment buildings and schools. For some inexplicable reason, manufactured housing is left out. That's not right, especially since those in mobile homes are so vulnerable in these storms," Bachus said.

The legislation, which allows local governments to use Community Development Block Grant funds to construct shelters, passed the House 401-6 in March 2001. Unfortunately, the Senate never took action on the measure.

The bill is being referred to the House Financial Services Committee, which has jurisdiction over housing issues. Bachus is a senior member of the committee.