

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. Spencer Bachus (R-AL) today announced that Alabama is one of only six states receiving a bonus award from the federal government for reducing its out-of-wedlock birth rate.

"Reducing out-of-wedlock births is a major way to reduce the risk of welfare dependency," said Bachus. "Alabama is receiving \$19,822,300 because of our success in decreasing out-of-wedlock births without experiencing an increase in abortions. One of the priorities of the 1996 welfare reform law was promoting personal responsibility. In this area, Alabama has succeeded where many states have failed."

Under the welfare reform law passed by Congress five years ago, annual bonuses are awarded to states with the largest reduction in the proportion of out-of-wedlock births to total births. In order to receive the bonuses, states must also show a decrease in their abortion rate from 1995.}