

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. Spencer Bachus (R-AL) today announced federal grants totaling \$1,793,207 to hire 16 new law enforcement officers to work in schools in Jefferson County, Tuscaloosa, Columbiana and Pell City.

"Police officers in schools not only deter violence and provide security, they can also counsel students on problems like drugs and alcohol," said Bachus. "In addition, it's a good way to build healthy relationships between police officers and students, so our youth are instilled with a respect for the law."

The grants are funded by Congress through a program called Community Oriented Policing (COPs) in Schools and allow police departments to pay the salaries and benefits of the school police officers for three years. The grants will provide \$517,870 in funding for five police officers in Jefferson County schools; \$569,575 for five police officers in Tuscaloosa County schools; \$342,366 for three police officers in Tuscaloosa city schools; \$250,000 for two police officers in Columbiana schools; and \$113,396 for one police officer for Pell City schools, Bachus said.

In order to be eligible to receive a COPs in Schools grant, a law enforcement agency must enter into an agreement with a specific school or school district and work with school officials to complete the grant application, detailing specifically how the new officers will be used in the schools.