

**WASHINGTON** -- Painful vaccine injections could be a thing of the past through research being conducted at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and funded through appropriations secured by U.S. Rep. Spencer Bachus (R-AL) in the defense budgets for the past three years.

Bachus announced today that an additional \$3 million appropriation is being included in this year's defense bill to fund the ongoing research at UAB that seeks to develop vaccines applied directly to the skin rather than through needle injections. This appropriation, which the House is scheduled to approve later this week, is in addition to the \$4.5 million Bachus included in previous defense budgets for the research.

"This research could revolutionize the practice of medicine not only in the United States, but throughout the world. We could eliminate needles and syringes and the accompanying pain. A baby born in the United States today receives 12 shots in the first 18 months, and three to seven more before age six. A vaccine without a needle will eliminate the pain, drive down the cost and increase the participation in immunization programs," said Bachus.

"A conventional anthrax vaccine requires six doses plus an annual booster shot. A patch would not require six doses to be effective," said Bachus. "Another advantage of such a vaccine would be that vaccines could be dried and shipped without the need for constant refrigeration, which will help allow for vaccination of large numbers of people at reduced costs."

UAB scientists have been working at the Vectored Vaccine Laboratory on needle-free vaccinations for anthrax, cancer, influenza and tetanus. The research funds were included in the defense bill because the Department of Defense is interested in the research to create an alternative to the current anthrax vaccine.