

BIRMINGHAM (August 16) – Congressman Spencer Bachus (AL-6) discussed the importance of tornado safety during dedication ceremonies today for a new storm shelter in the City of Brent in Bibb County.

Congressman Bachus spoke at an open house and dedication program for the new shelter, which is located at 10445 Highway 5. Bachus worked with community leaders to obtain \$750,000 in Federal Emergency Management Agency funds for the construction of the shelter, which will be able to safeguard as many as 290 people during severe storms. The building will also be used as a Senior Center.

“Community storm shelters save lives. We saw that again during the tornadoes that struck Alabama in April 2011. It was a pleasure to work with elected officials and civic leaders in Brent and Bibb County to build this shelter to provide citizens with safe shelter from the storm. The building will serve the additional function of providing a much-needed center for senior citizens to gather and socialize. It is a great new addition to community,” stated Congressman Bachus.

A longtime proponent of tornado awareness, Congressman Bachus is the author of a 2003 law that encouraged the construction of storm shelters in manufacturing housing communities.

Tornado safety has been a priority for Brent. The community was struck by a devastating tornado in 1973 that killed five people and left widespread damage

“There are still people who do not have a safe place to go during a tornado. We have early warning systems that can give people time to seek shelter and with this new building, we are bringing safe shelter even closer to residents of Brent and Bibb County,” said Mayor Dennis Stripling.

Mayor Stripling said the community has long-term plans to locate a new fire hall next to the storm shelter.

Today's dedication ceremonies were attended by a large audience of local and state officials and citizens from the community.