



Office of Representative Heath Shuler

Representing North Carolina's Eleventh Congressional District

For Immediate Release

June 15, 2007

Contact: Andrew Whalen, Communications Director

office: (202) 225-6401 / cell: (202) 731-5116

Rep. Shuler Votes to Protect America's Borders and Invest in Homeland Security

Homeland Security Appropriations Bill Passes House with Funding for Record Number of Border Patrol Agents

Washington, D.C. – Representative Heath Shuler today voted to approve a landmark Homeland Security appropriations bill that contains funding for a record number of border patrol agents to protect our borders, while also providing first responders with additional training and equipment, improving aviation and port security, and installing strong accountability measures to ensure taxpayer dollars are spent properly.

“Protecting our nation is the highest duty of Congress, and we cannot do that without fully and properly securing our borders,” said Rep. Shuler. “I am glad the House has made border security a top priority in this appropriations bill and provided the resources for border security fencing and to recruit and retain border patrol agents.”

The 2008 Homeland Security Appropriations bill:

- Includes funding for 3,000 additional Border Patrol agents, bringing the number of Border Patrol agents to 17,819.
- Provides \$4.8 billion for Immigration and Customs enforcement, including \$15 million for the Department of Homeland Security to contact every prison, jail, and correctional facility in the U.S. monthly to identify incarcerated and convicted aliens who are eligible for deportation and to start deportation proceedings where ordered.
- Rejects the President's proposed \$1 billion cut for training and equipment for first responders and instead expands support for local law enforcement personnel, firefighters and other first responders.
- Invests in port security by significantly increasing funding to protect critical port facilities and infrastructure.
- Improves aviation security by providing funding for new explosive detection systems at airports and funding to double the amount of cargo screened on passenger aircraft.

The legislation approved by the House today also includes strong oversight provisions to ensure the careful spending of taxpayers' dollars by the Department of Homeland Security and eliminates wasteful no-bid contracts.

“The people of Western North Carolina want to know that the hard-earned tax dollars they send to Washington are being spent properly. The tough accountability measures included in this bill will make sure that our tax dollars are being spent to protect our nation in the most efficient manner.”

###