

REP. TAYLOR ANNOUNCES HANCOCK, JACKSON COUNTIES TO RECEIVE FEDERAL FUNDING

Money to go toward wireless network, policing services

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Rep. Gene Taylor today announced two projects that will receive federal funding through the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies. Hancock County will receive \$587,500 for permanent installation of communications equipment for the public safety wireless network under the Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services Law Enforcement Technologies and Interoperable Communications Program. After Hurricane Katrina, both FEMA and MEMA instructed Hancock County to lease a consolidated communications system for public safety officials and emergency responders. The equipment included a \$6 million wireless network. Not having the funding to permanently install the network, it was installed at sea level or below sea level, leaving it vulnerable to flooding and future hurricanes. There is also the risk that communications will fail in another emergency situation. To mitigate risks, the equipment must be installed 15 to 20 feet above the ground. The funding allocated will go toward installing the network permanently and properly above ground. The Jackson County Office of the Sheriff's Methamphetamine Initiative will receive \$211,500 for equipment for surveillance operations, additional anti-drug law enforcement training, and funding for cleaning methamphetamine lab sites. Jackson County has seen a large amount of methamphetamine-related arrests, and has located working methamphetamine labs within the county. The funding will be used to further reduce methamphetamine use and eradicate methamphetamine labs in the county. "I am grateful that these two projects will receive funding," Rep. Taylor said. "As we continue to rebuild and revitalize the coast, we are faced with new challenges everyday. These projects are necessary to meet those challenges."