

(WASHINGTON) – Following the first day of the official start of the 2011 Hurricane season, Congressman Allen West (FL-22) announces he has become an original cosponsor of three bills that aim to help Floridians better prepare for Hurricanes and other natural disasters:

The Natural Disaster Mitigation Act: provides a tax credit (equal to 25% of mitigation expenditures, up to \$5,000) to qualified homeowners who mitigate their homes to reduce the risks resulting from hurricanes and earthquakes.

The Policyholder Disaster Protection Act: creates a tax-deferred reserve for insurance companies to cover the losses from future natural disasters. Currently, insurance companies can only reserve against losses already occurred.

The Catastrophe Savings Accounts Act: creates tax-exempt catastrophe savings accounts (CSAs) to pay expenses resulting from a presidentially declared major disaster.

These bills, originally sponsored by fellow Florida Congressman Tom Rooney (FL-16), not only encourage people to better protect their homes, they will save potentially millions of dollars in clean-up and repair costs, should a disaster occur. The bills also keep insurance premiums down for homeowners. For every \$1 spent on mitigation, \$4 in post storm cleanup and rebuilding is saved.

"Every year, Floridians pay close attention to the weather from June to November, knowing the potential severe damage that a hurricane can do to their homes and businesses," West said. "These bills provide the incentive for all Floridians to be proactive in protecting their homes and livelihood, while keeping insurance rates under control."

Congressman West strongly encourages all South Floridians to take the necessary steps to prepare for the upcoming hurricane season by following a simple checklist prepared by the American Red Cross, which can be found [here](#).