

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today voted against the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Bill, arguing that it does not invest enough in fighting financial crimes, which are used by drug and human smugglers to conduct business.

“Human and drug smugglers continue to use our financial networks to facilitate illegal immigration and bring violence to our communities,” said Mitchell. “Congress must do more, not less, to crack down on these violent crimes.”

Mitchell said he is disappointed that H.R. 2829 does not fully fund the President’s \$86 million request for the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN). This bill removes funds from the President’s FinCEN request and instead delivers a 5 percent increase in funds to the Treasury Department, nearly 90 percent of which will go to the Internal Revenue Service.

FinCEN enforces crimes committed through our nation’s financial networks, such as money laundering, mortgage fraud and identity theft. These crimes are usually perpetrated by drug smugglers, illegal immigrant smugglers and terrorists. FinCEN creates networks of law enforcement with FBI, IRS, and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to investigate suspicious activity and large cash withdrawals.

Arizona has the highest incidence of identity theft in the nation. [Source: [Federal Trade Commission](#) ]

Mitchell said Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard’s success in utilizing Arizona’s Financial Crimes Task Force to crack down on illegal immigrant smuggling illustrates the need for greater federal investment in fighting human and drug smugglers. [Source: [Arizona Attorney General](#) ; [Arizona Republic](#) , Oct. 13, 2006; [Horizon](#) , April 3, 2007]