

WASHINGTON— U.S. Rep. Harry E. Mitchell today said America's economic crisis threatens the financial security of America's middle class, and Congress must take drastic action to avoid a potential economic disaster.

Mitchell joined with a bipartisan majority to approve the revised economic rescue package aimed to avoid a meltdown that could force our nation's economy into a depression. H.R. 1424, the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act, passed the House by a vote of 263 to 171.

"This legislation is far from perfect, but the truth is we're at the point that if Congress fails to act, the impact on our economy could be devastating," said Mitchell. "This isn't about Wall Street. The credit crunch crisis affects everyone. If the credit market freezes any more, Arizona small businesses that rely on credit to stock their shelves and pay their employees will be in jeopardy. It could become nearly impossible for many Arizona families to finance cars, homes or college."

On Monday, Mitchell voted against the package after it was rushed to the House floor in less than 24 hours, saying it was wrong to pass a \$700 billion bill without proper examination from Congress and the public.

Mitchell said the opportunity to revise the legislation allowed Congress to make some improvements to better protect taxpayers and garner broader bipartisan support. Some of the Senate's changes, such as raising the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation's insurance limit to \$250,000, allowing flexibility in "mark-to-market" rules and extending solar energy tax credits, will help restore consumer confidence and provide a boost to Arizona's economy.

The solar tax credits are critical to helping the nation achieve energy independence, and pave the way for the construction of the Solana Generating Station outside of Gila Bend, a 280-megawatt solar-thermal facility that would be the world's largest of its kind. Solana, a joint project of Arizona Public Service and Abengoa, is estimated to produce 1,500 jobs and produce more than \$4 billion worth of energy over the next 30 years. [Source: Politico, July 30, 2008].

"Extending the solar energy tax credits are important to creating high-tech green jobs in Arizona," said Mitchell. "This is the kind of economic investment we need in Arizona. Without these tax credits, Solana will never happen."

Despite the improvements, Mitchell said the bill is far from perfect, and should not have included earmark spending.

"I am not happy with everything that is in the economic rescue package, especially the earmarks that the Senate snuck into the bill at the last-minute," said Mitchell. "That's precisely the kind of legislating that makes the public so distrustful of Congress, and so suspicious when we ask them to commit \$700 billion of their hard-earned money for the sake of the common good."

Mitchell Supports Economic Recovery Package

Thursday, 02 October 2008 20:00

The Senate approved the package with earmarks that have nothing to do with restoring the nation's financial markets. [Source: San Francisco Chronicle, Oct. 3, 2008]