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## **Klein Supports Safety of Seniors Act, Urges President to Quickly Sign Into Law**

**Washington, D.C.** – U.S. Representative Ron Klein (FL-22) today voted in favor of, and offered strong support for, the Safety of Seniors Act of 2008 (S. 845). This important legislation passed the U.S. Senate in August, and today was passed by the House under suspension of the rules. It now awaits the President's signature. The Safety of Seniors Act creates a national education campaign and awards grants to qualified public and private organizations to reduce falls among older Americans and prevent repeat falls.

"This legislation addresses a serious health concern for our seniors, and it has passed both Houses of Congress with bipartisan majorities," Klein said. "I urge the President to quickly sign the bill into law and bring much-needed relief to senior citizens across the country."

The legislation addresses a major public health concern, as falls are the leading cause of injury deaths among people 65 and older, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In 2005, nearly 16,000 people over 65 died from injuries related to falls, and 1.8 million received emergency room treatment for such injuries, at a cost of \$19.2 billion.

"Our seniors deserve the utmost in care and support," Klein said. "The legislation passed today will improve our ability to keep our parents and grandparents safe, healthy and independent for many years to come. As all of us with aging parents or loved ones know, the fear of injury from a fall is not only a medical issue – it also hinders the independence of seniors who would otherwise prefer to live on their own. Nationally, 42 percent of all nursing home admissions are the direct result of an injury from one or more falls."

Today's House version of the Safety of Seniors Act was passed as part of a package of public health legislation. April 7-13 is National Public Health Week.

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