Washington, D.C. – Today legislation which will help to secure our waters, H.R. 1148, passed the House of Representatives. Congressman Tom Rooney is an original cosponsor of H.R. 1148 which was introduced by fellow Floridian Rep. Gus Bilirakis. This legislation would require the Homeland Security Secretary to work with the Coast Guard to create a program for the mobile biometric identification, in the maritime environment, of aliens unlawfully attempting to enter the United States. This legislation will also require DHS to integrate this new biometric program with other systems at DHS and other agencies.

“This legislation is a good step to help protect the waters off the coast of Florida,” said Rooney. “Criminals and terrorists continue to look for new ways to illegally enter the U.S. and we must take measures to protect the vast coastlines of our state. We need to continue to use the latest technology available and implementing a biometric system at sea is an important tool to protecting our homeland.”